

*Journal of*

# CALENDAR REFORM

September 1954

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CHARLES DEXTER MORRIS  
*22 January 1883—20 May 1954*

## In Memoriam

IT is most difficult for his associates in The World Calendar Association to express the sorrow and sense of loss occasioned by the death of Charles Dexter Morris, editor of the *Journal of Calendar Reform* and Public Relations Counsel.

It was on his insistence that this *Journal* was founded and it was his initiative, his guidance and his steadfast belief in its importance that brought it distinction.

Born in Eldred, Pennsylvania, and graduated from Olean High School in New York in 1901 and from Yale University in 1906, Mr. Morris began his newspaper career in New Haven and Bridgeport, Connecticut, later working for the *New York World* and the *New York Sun*. Throughout World War I Mr. Morris was a member of the London Staff of the Associated Press. In 1918 he headed the American Red Cross news and publicity service in London with the rank of Major. Mr. Morris' achievements in the Near East relief field brought him a number of decorations including one from King George of Greece in 1923.

As a public relations consultant in New York, Mr. Morris became interested in The World Calendar movement and accompanied Miss Achelis to Geneva, Switzerland, to attend the League of Nations international conference on calendar reform in 1931.

Since then his advice, counsel and loyal service have been valued by all associated in advancing the cause of calendar revision. His efforts, so vital to the world aspects of the enterprise to which he devoted many years, were commensurate with his wide experience as a journalist and a citizen of the world.

Mr. Morris will be missed by his many friends. As one such expressed it in a letter: "Although I saw him in recent years only occasionally, my warm affection for him was unchanged." His prevailing modesty and his friendly nature endeared him to all. We have lost a staunch friend—an earnest worker devoted to the cause.

His death is recorded as a sad duty and with the expression of the most profound sorrow.

—The World Calendar Association





THE WORLD CALENDAR FOR ONE WORLD

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### Editorial

## *Calendar Marches On!*

**T**HE Calendar indeed marches on!

On 28 July the United Nations took an important stride toward the goal of attaining a scientific civil World Calendar. On that date the U.N. Economic and Social Council *unanimously* approved the Resolution introduced by India and seconded by Yugoslavia calling on all governments to present their views on calendar reform. These views are requested by early 1955 for consideration by the Council at its forthcoming session, to be held in New York next May.

It is with real satisfaction that your *Journal* reports this significant event. The many preparatory meetings and conversations for the conference made heavy demands on the able groups spearheading the cause. They are entitled to our sincere appreciation.

Opposition came from those who were unduly apprehensive for political, sectarian, or other special reasons. Some were simply indifferent, using the time-worn excuse that there are more important problems which should have precedence. There were others—the cynics—who have little faith in progress, who are content with the *status quo*. The arguments of these groups were met with skill and tact.

The proponents of revision were encouraged by the knowledge that millions of people representing a variety of cultures look forward to an improved calendar as a practical necessity for today and as a definite step towards international cooperation and amity.

The ECOSOC decision was the only consistent course the United Nations could take. It came as an inevitable outgrowth of historical events concerning calendar

reform—the years of deliberations of both the old League of Nations and the new United Nations. It was in keeping with the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations—a body established “to promote social progress and better standards of life in large freedom . . . to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all people.” It was an acknowledgment that *Time* is one of the most significant economic and social influences in life. By recognizing the calendar—Time’s agent—as a uniting force and by requesting its study by the governments of the world, the United Nations can now proceed toward its revision in a regular and orderly procedure.

The story of what was accomplished at Geneva is summarized in this issue of the *Journal*. The detailed report of the ECOSOC Plenary Session on World Calendar Reform is being published in Geneva. Copies of this pamphlet will be available upon request to this Association.

Although proponents of The World Calendar had hoped for more positive and progressive action, they are satisfied, fully realizing, however, that much, very much has yet to be done. Intensive work with steadfast faith in the rightness of the cause will bring forth the desired result. With favorable opinions received, the Council can then proceed to bring the matter before the General Assembly. From the General Assembly the subject can be submitted to the individual governments for final ratification and adoption. The target date for that desired goal is Sunday, the first of January, 1961, when the present calendar and The World Calendar again coincide.

The issue is now squarely before all the governments of the world. But governments need the encouragement and assurance of public opinion. From the thousands of press stories and editorials, institutional endorsements and letters from individuals and organizations which come to its office, the Association knows that The World Calendar has the support of public opinion. But public opinion to be effective must express itself to those responsible for translating it into practical action.

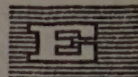
It now behooves all of us—as individuals, as members or officers of organizations and as responsible citizens—to make our voices heard. Now is the time for people throughout the world to write and to talk the cause over with influential men and women, friends and neighbors, and to impress upon everyone the urgency of making their own views known to those officials responsible for the position their government will take at the Council meeting next May.

**BETWEEN NOW AND THE SPRING OF 1955, GOVERNMENTS MUST STAND UP AND BE COUNTED.**

**BETWEEN NOW AND THE SPRING OF 1955, YOU AND I—THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR GOOD GOVERNMENT—MUST STAND UP AND BE COUNTED!**



UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



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30 July 1954

Eighteenth session  
Item 15

Dual Distribution

WORLD CALENDAR REFORM

The Economic and Social Council,

Noting the proposal for a reform of the calendar by international agreement contained in document E/2514,

Feeling that to enable further consideration of the proposal it is necessary to obtain the views of governments of States Members and non-members of the United Nations, on the desirability of calendar reform,

1. Requests the Secretary-General to transmit document E/2514 and any other relevant documents to the governments of States Members and non-members of the United Nations, with the request that they study the problem and furnish their views by some time early in 1955;

2. Decides to consider the matter again at its resumed nineteenth session, together with the replies received from governments.

Resolution adopted at the  
819th plenary meeting,  
28 July 1954.

## REFORME DU CALENDRIER UNIVERSEL

Le Conseil économique et social,

Notant la proposition relative à une réforme du calendrier par voie d'accord international, qui est exposée dans le document E/2514,

Estimant que, pour permettre un nouvel examen de cette proposition, il est nécessaire de recueillir l'avis des gouvernements des Etats Membres ou non membres de l'Organisation des Nations Unies quant à l'opportunité d'une réforme du calendrier,

1. Demande au Secrétaire général de transmettre le document E/2514 et tous autres documents pertinents aux gouvernements des Etats Membres ou non membres de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en les priant d'étudier la question et de faire connaître leur opinion vers le début de l'année 1955;

2. Décide de reprendre l'examen de cette question à la reprise de sa dix-neuvième session lorsqu'il sera en possession des réponses des gouvernements.

Résolution adoptée à la  
819e séance plénière,  
le 28 juillet 1954.

## REFORMA DEL CALENDARIO MUNDIAL

El Consejo Económico y Social,

Tomando nota de la propuesta de reforma del calendario por acuerdo internacional (Documento E/2514),

Estimando que para el estudio más detenido de la propuesta es necesario conocer la opinión de los gobiernos de los Estados Miembros y no miembros de las Naciones Unidas acerca de la conveniencia de reformar el calendario,

1. Pide al Secretario General que transmita a los gobiernos de los Estados Miembros y no miembros de las Naciones Unidas, el documento E/2514 y cualesquiera otros documentos pertinentes con la petición de que estudien el problema y comuniquen sus opiniones a principios de 1955;

2. Decide examinar de nuevo la cuestión, junto con las respuestas que se hayan recibido de los gobiernos, al reanudarse el 19º período de sesiones.

Resolución aprobada en la  
819ª sesión plenaria,  
28 de julio de 1954.



*Geneva Press Release 29 July 1954*

*The World Calendar Association, International*

# THE WORLD CALENDAR GOES TO WORLD'S GOVERNMENTS

**T**HE World Calendar Association is highly gratified at the result of a one-and-a-half hours' debate\* in the Economic and Social Council Plenary Session yesterday (28 July), when the Indian Delegation, supported by the Yugoslav Delegation, introduced the resolution reprinted on page 110 of this issue of the *Journal*. The resolution was passed *unanimously*.

The Association's natural elation at this important event in calendar history is due to the fact that for many years calendar reformers have sought to bring this question before the governments for international action. This week their efforts have been crowned with a success exceeding their best hopes, for they witnessed that very rare event in United Nations circles—UNANIMITY!

The final resolution, it is true, did not go as far as some reformers have wished. On the other hand, those groups in certain countries opposed to calendar reform have been shown unmistakably that the governments of the world are not only concerned with the defects of the present calendar, but are willing to examine the problem on its merits. The World Calendar Plan, so adroitly presented by the

Government of India (which has its own calendar committee working under the chairmanship of the distinguished nuclear physicist, Professor M. N. Saha, M.P.) now goes to over 80 governments, with other relevant documents for their examination and report at the Council's Nineteenth Session, which is to meet in New York next spring.

The debate has been described by U.N. officials as one of the most instructive discussions during the present session. The delegate of Egypt referred to his country's contribution to civilization as having produced mankind's first calendar—that of the Pharaohs—which was still being used by the peasants alongside the Gregorian calendar; and, with so long an experience of using two calendars side by side, he had a perfectly open mind on changing to a more efficient modern calendar when the time is ripe.

The Chinese delegate remarked that his calendar, used by the people at large, went back 6,000 years. The advent of the Chinese New Year was still recorded by the date of the year by a New York newspaper. The United States delegate, who at first thought that the calendar did not belong to the economic and social sphere, but should be considered as a political question, afterwards appeared to have modified his view by promising that

\*See United Nations official records E/2514, E/L.628.



his government would carefully examine the whole problem, but any calendar change affecting the U.S.A. would require a decision by Congress.

The U.S.S.R. delegate—who had just exchanged bitter words with the American during the previous agenda item on infringement of trade union rights—now found himself voting with the majority, stating that Russia favored eventual reform of the calendar, which, in his view, ought not to be postponed. Pakistan, however, supported by China, at first wanted no action and spoke feelingly against the proposal as being inopportune and unnecessary. But the pacifistic diplomacy of the Indian delegate, who explained that his government were not seeking to force any particular calendar on the nations at this time, but merely wanted fair investigation of the advantages or otherwise of reform, so that a later session of the Council could decide what was best for everybody, won over the opposition to agree to a slight change of phraseology.

The British delegate tactfully intervened at one stage between India and Pakistan in bringing about this reconciliation. Delegates smiled broadly when India complimented the United Kingdom on playing its "historic role of peace-maker."

All this means that the next half-dozen months will be devoted to intensive studies of the calendar problem by the world's governments, leading to, possibly, the setting up of some international committee at the next session to collate and analyze the replies.

The World Calendar Association, Int'l., which enjoys consultative status with ECOSOC, has already begun a number

of research studies pointing to the economic, financial, administrative and other advantages of the Indian plan. Moreover, its national branches in many countries will seek to provide their own governments with facts and figures to be considered by them in preparing their reports for the United Nations.

A 16-page memorandum, entitled, "Economic and Social Advantages of The World Calendar," has currently been issued from Geneva as a pilot study in this field, giving concrete examples of the saving in time, money, and human energy, in a number of industrial and other economic enterprises, if and when The World Calendar is put into operation, as envisaged, on Sunday, 1 January 1961, when the old and new calendars again coincide. (See pp. 124-133 of this issue of this *Journal*.)



**WORLDSDAY:** as depicted by an Associated Press Newsfeatures Cartoon that appeared in many American newspapers.

# THE INDIAN PROPOSAL FOR WORLD CALENDAR REFORM

By Professor Meghnad Saha, F.R.S.

*Member of the House of People of India (The Parliament), Honorary Director of the Institute of Nuclear Physics, Calcutta, representing the Indian Council of World Affairs at Geneva, 7 July 1954*

**M**R. CHAIRMAN, I have been a supporter of The World Calendar Plan, as presented by The World Calendar Association, for over two decades, both as an astronomer and as a social worker. Let me state my reasons:

(1) *Two types of Calendars.* It should be realized that calendars are used for regulating two essentially distinct types of human activities, viz: (a) Civic and administrative, and (b) Social and religious.

In ancient and medieval times, different countries and religions had developed their characteristic calendars to serve both purposes, but in the modern age, due to historic reasons, almost all countries use (a) the Gregorian calendar for regulation of civic and administrative life, and (b) their own characteristic calendars for regulation of social and religious observances.

Even in Christian countries, which apparently use the Gregorian calendar for both purposes, in actual practice, for fixing the date of Easter and other holidays which move with it, some additional time-reckonings have to be done. These reckonings constitute the ecclesiastic calendar, and are a survival of earlier luni-solar calendars.

(2) *Objective of The World Calendar Plan.* The United Nations organization is, by its own Charter, prevented from interfering with the social and religious life of nations. The World Calendar Plan has not the slightest intention of doing so. It simply seeks to substitute for the civil Gregorian calendar, The World Calendar, in the hope, as will be seen, that it will lead to simplification of civic and administrative life for all, and promote understanding amongst nations.

(3) *The Gregorian Calendar analyzed.* Let us see what are the disadvantages of the Gregorian calendar as used for civic and administrative purposes. They are: (a) that the years and months begin on different weekdays, and (b) that months are of unequal length, from 28 to 31 days, and they start on weekdays which are most changeable.

This happens because a normal year of 365 days consists of 52 weeks plus one day; and a leap year coming every fourth year has 366 days, and consists of 52 weeks plus 2 days. If a normal year begins on a Sunday, the next year will start on Monday, and the year after a leap year will jump two weekdays.

This causes a most undesirable wandering of the weekday on which the year



begins, as is seen for the next few years. This year, 1954, has started on a Friday. We shall have

1955 starting on Saturday  
1956 starting on Sunday  
1957 starting on Tuesday  
1958 starting on Wednesday  
1959 starting on Thursday  
1960 starting on Friday  
1961 starting on Sunday

How much better it would be for civic and administrative life if we could have a device by which every year could start on a Sunday!

(4) *The World Calendar Plan*. This is how The World Calendar Plan proposes to prevent this wandering of the starting-day of the year. It is a very simple device.

Let us, from 1961, which starts on a Sunday, call the last day of the year (i.e. 31 December), which would be under the present system a Sunday, *Worldsday*. That is, we do not give it a weekday denomination. Then 1962 also will start on a Sunday, and so will every year till we come to the next leap year, 1964. On that year, we shall insert an additional day, the Leapyear Day, at the end of June, and have the usual *Worldsday* at the end of the year; then 1965 will also start on a Sunday.

So, by this simple device of having a *Worldsday* at the end of every year and a Leapyear Day at the end of June every fourth year, both without any weekday denomination, we can make every year start on a Sunday. This will prove to be an inestimable advantage for the civic life of mankind.

Let us now turn to the months. I do not wish to trouble you by giving illustrations of the chaotic way in which the

starting weekdays of months vary. They are chaotic, because lengths of months vary from 28 to 31. There is not the slightest scientific justification for these varying lengths. They are said to have been due to the caprice of two Roman dictators, or some other historical cause not yet clear. How much better it would be for civic purposes, if each month could start on a fixed day of the week?

I need hardly dilate on this point. It must be self-evident.

The World Calendar Plan proposes to put this right by dividing the year into four quarters, each of three months of 31, 30, 30 days duration. According to this plan,

January, April, July, October would have each 31 days, and start on Sunday,

February, May, August, November would have each 30 days, and start on Wednesday,

March, June, September, December would have each 30 days, and start on Friday.

If this plan be adopted, the calendar will be perpetual and foolproof. What a welcome change it would prove when compared to the present chaotic and wandering calendar!

(5) *The World Calendar Plan violates no scientific principle*. Let us see if The World Calendar Plan violates any scientific principle.

Our answer must be no. The year has to conform to the period of the Sun, and this is covered by the leap-year rules, amended by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582. The leap-year rules, introduced by the Iranian poet-astronomer, Omar Khayyam, in 1079 were more accurate, but less convenient. The Gregorian leap-year

rules will cause a mistake of only one day in 3,000 years, which is trivial.

As regards the duration of months, The World Calendar Plan is a marked improvement on the chaotic lengths and starting days of months, inherited from the Julian calendar, which has been tolerated too long.

(6) *Objections to The World Calendar Plan.* Why, therefore, do several of our esteemed friends raise objections to The World Calendar Plan?

The objections chiefly come from several Jewish organizations, on the ground that The World Calendar Plan interferes with the unbroken seven-day week by introducing World-day and Leap-year Day without any weekday denomination. This, they say, will interfere with *their* religious life. Let us examine these objections.

The seven-day week is not a natural cycle, like the year, which is determined by the Sun and which cannot be interfered with, for the Sun is the arbiter and sole spring of human activities. Even Pope Gregory XIII had to bow to science when, to restore the dates to proper seasons, he had to proclaim Friday, 5 October, as Friday, 15 October. Nor is it a natural cycle like the month, which was determined, in all earlier calendars, by the moon. But the moon, as a time-marker, is very erratic, as expressed succinctly in the term "lunatic"! So an Egyptian wise man, whose name we do not know, dropped the moon as a time-marker some 5,000 years ago; and wise men, from Hipparchus and Ptolemy down to modern times, have applauded his decision. Nobody thinks of going back to *lunar months* for civic purposes; not even the Jews, who use the lunar

month, however, like Hindus and Arabs, for religious purposes.

(7) *The Seven-Day Week is needed on psychological ground.* The seven-day week is an artificial man-made cycle. The necessity of having a shorter cycle like the week arises from the psychological need of mankind for having a day of rest and religious service after protracted labor extending over some days. The ancient nations tried to solve it in different ways.

(8) *How the Seven-Day Week came into existence.* The ancient Egyptians had a week of ten days which was revived during the French Revolution. The Vedic Hindus had a week of six days. The ancient Babylonians marked out the first, eighth, fifteenth and twenty-second day of every month, which was lunar with them and started after the new moon, for religious observances. This was a kind of seven-day week, but the last week consisted of eight or nine days, depending on whether the month had 29 or 30 days. The days of the week had no particular name. The continuous seven-day week was evolved by the astronomers of Chaldea, as the country of Babylon came to be called from the seventh century B.C., on *astrological* grounds which are well known. I do not want to trouble you with this account, but it is available in a leaflet published by me. The Jews, who came into intimate contact with the Babylonian civilization from the days of their captivity down to the reign of the Seleucid emperors, adopted it as a cardinal principle of their faith, and were responsible for its propagation. But even the writers of the New Testament do not know any weekday, for they say that the crucifixion of Christ took place on the



day before the feast of Passover, which was, and is still, celebrated on the full-moon day in the month of Nisan. Assignment of this day to a Friday has been shown to be a fifth century device.

(9) *Introduction of the unbroken seven-day week.* The weekdays were first introduced into the Christian world by the Roman emperor Constantine in the year 321 A.D., but he shifted the sabbath for Christians to the first day of the week. The weekday is not mentioned in ancient Indian Scriptures or epics like the Mahabharata or in inscriptions of about 200 A.D. A weekday is first mentioned in an inscription dated 484 A.D. It is a foreign importation to India, and is sparingly used in Hindu religious practices, which are still guided by the moon's phases.

(10) *The World Calendar Plan does not interfere with religious calendars.* The religious sanction for the seven-day cycle is therefore either non-existent, or slight, amongst communities other than Jews, and even amongst them it is not very ancient. But The World Calendar Plan has no intention of interfering with the characteristic calendars of communities or nations. They can exist side by side with The World Calendar. For such

communities as intend to maintain the continuous seven-day week, their religious weekdays, including Sundays, would no doubt wander through The World Calendar weekdays, and cause some inconvenience to the very, very small fraction of people who would want to observe their religious rites according to established use.

But these inconveniences can be adjusted by agreement, and it would be egoistical on the part of a particular community or communities to try to impede the passage of a measure of such great usefulness to the whole of mankind on the plea that The World Calendar Plan interferes with the continuous seven-day week. Calendars are based on Science, which everybody must bow to; and on Convention, which may be altered by mutual consent. The unbroken seven-day week is a *Convention*, but The World Calendar Plan has proposed a far better *Convention*, which should be examined on its own merits by an *ad hoc* committee of specialists.

Let us follow the wise Chinese maxim: "Religions are many; Reason is one." World harmony can be promoted only by sweet reasonableness.

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## NEWS BULLETIN

**P**ERTH, Australia.—Professor A. D. Ross, chairman of the Australian Committee for The World Calendar, presented the subject of calendar reform to the Second Pan Indian Ocean Science Congress, held in Perth in August. Professor Ross came from Glasgow in 1912 as head of the Physics Department of the University of Western Australia. He received the Kelvin Medal in 1914, and during World War II was on scientific assignments for the army and navy.

**GENEVA.**—The United Nations Information Service is distributing to radio stations throughout the world a 15-minute recorded program on calendar reform. The program includes interviews with the President of The World Calendar Association, with a representative of the India delegation at the U.N., and with Dr. Clarence Decker, former President of the University of Kansas City.

# THE INDIAN PROPOSAL FOR WORLD CALENDAR REFORM

By Elisabeth Achelis

*Statement by the President of The World Calendar Association, International, to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations of the Economic and Social Council, meeting on Wednesday, 7 July, 1954, at Geneva.*

**M**R. CHAIRMAN, in accepting the honor of addressing this Committee in the name of The World Calendar Association, my first words must be to explain the absence of a far more distinguished leader of the world-wide movement for calendar reform, who is not able to be present in Geneva, as we had hoped, to speak in support of the Indian proposal. I refer to Sir Harold Spencer Jones, the Astronomer Royal of Great Britain, who, since observing the total eclipse of the sun over Greenland last week, has been too preoccupied with other engagements to get here for this meeting, as he had intended. With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I will read a letter which Sir Harold Spencer Jones has asked me to put before the Committee. In it he says:

I am sorry that it is not possible for me to be in Geneva, but, as you know, there will be a total eclipse of the sun about that time, and I shall be observing it in Greenland.

There are very few people, I think, who would claim that our present calendar is perfect. Its defects and inconveniences are too obvious. Many schemes for its reform have been proposed and discussed and it is the scheme advocated by The World Calendar Association which has received by far

the widest support. It has the great merits of simplicity and of involving the minimum changes in the present calendar.

No scheme for reform would be acceptable unless there is an agreement amongst the principal nations to adopt the same scheme and to introduce it at the same time. For that reason the support of the United Nations is essential.

It would not be possible, in view of the heavy agenda of the Economic and Social Council, for full discussion of The World Calendar to be held during the meeting of the Council. I hope, therefore, that the Council will agree to set up a special Committee to consider fully all aspects of the question and to report to either the next session of the Council or the following session. With best wishes for success.

(Signed) Sir Harold Spencer Jones

It is significant, Mr. Chairman, that men of science and practical affairs are among the first to appreciate the importance to the human race of the reform which is now before you, and publicly urge its acceptance. It was a compatriot of Sir Harold Spencer Jones and a world-figure in business affairs—the late Lord Desborough—who was for many years an ardent advocate of calendar reform. Lord Desborough was President of the International Chamber of Commerce that took the initiative at its Congress in 1910, urging the world's governments to adopt,



by international agreement, a perpetual and ordered time-system in place of the present irregular and inefficient calendar.

Indeed, The World Calendar, now proposed by the government of India for universal adoption, has behind it the consistent support of leaders of thought and action in many fields, who have recognized the contribution that this reform will make towards economic and social advance in all countries.

The World Calendar takes its place as a natural, though much overdue, sequel to previous reforms of the same nature which have been arrived at by international agreement before the days of the United Nations. I should like to remind the Committee that the last major reform affecting the world's time-system was the adoption of Universal Time—sometimes called "Greenwich Time"—exactly 70 years ago. It is noteworthy that the United Nations emblem itself records that important event in the growth of world unity. In its emblem, the land areas are aligned on the zero meridian and the International Date Line—where a six or eight-day week is experienced—was fixed by international agreement in 1884. When it was accepted, one New York newspaper made this comment:

The universal acceptance of the Greenwich Meridian . . . recognized one of the first and most fundamental instances of genuine international action compelled by the growing inter-relationship of people.

I do not have to trouble this Committee with proofs—which are obvious to all professional and businessmen, administrators, travellers, and working people alike—of the incalculable advantages which accrued from that reform. Then, we dealt with clocks; now, we are dealing with the calendar.

I should, however, like to call the special attention of the Committee to the fact that no individual government could have claimed a public mandate at that time for carrying out that sensible reform. As Lord Merthyr, the Chairman of the British Committee of my organization, has recently said:

Must we wait for calendar reform until the mob is clamoring at the gate? In this type of reform, the governments must lead—not wait for public opinion.

Again, in advocating the acceptance of Universal (or Standard) Time, that eminent Canadian engineer, Sir Sandford Fleming, said:

We have inherited from our forefathers certain ideas and usages in relation to time and its measurement which the progress of events has rendered effete and inadequate. These long continued customs answered their purpose in the condition of mankind when they were originated. We have, however, now entered upon a period in world history entirely different in its conditions, and it is not surprising that the usages of bygone centuries are found to be incompatible with the new order of things.

Those words, Gentlemen, spoken seventy years ago, fit exactly the position of calendar reform today. What a group of railroad men accomplished in 1884 in giving the world Standard Time, the Economic and Social Council can do in 1954 by initiating action to give mankind a standard calendar.

However, at the inauguration of Universal Time, it is recorded that there were some narrow-minded people who declared that, if this international agreement went through, men would be trying to change "the immutable laws of God." That purely emotional opposition has long since been forgotten: but the benefits of stabilizing clock-time for the world are now part of our common civilization.

As the Committee is aware, some objections to the Indian proposal have been raised by certain religious groups who would find it inconvenient to reconcile the new civil calendar with some of their special calendars. On that particular point, I should like, very briefly, to direct the Committee's attention to four considerations:

*First*, in the words of Sir Harold Spencer Jones, when speaking recently at the Hayden Planetarium, New York City:

The question of the calendar is primarily a civil matter. Religious calendars, such as the Jewish, Moslem and Hindu, can exist alongside the civil calendar and be independent of it.

Similarly, the Permanent Delegate of India, Dr. Rajeshmar Dayal, in a broadcast over the United Nations radio last March, emphasized:

Our proposal will not adversely affect the religious calendars of any sect, for they would always be at liberty to follow their own religious calendars.

*Secondly*, objections of this order are clearly "committee points." The time of the Economic and Social Council ought not to be spent on questions on which even the objectors do not agree among themselves. Supporters of the present plan would welcome a careful examination of opposition viewpoints before major decision is arrived at. An *ad hoc* committee of specialists, set up by the Economic and Social Council on the basis of the Indian proposal, would naturally consider alternative suggestions which might be forthcoming from one quarter or another. That would seem the most fair, just, and democratic way to handle a primarily technical reform of this kind.

*Thirdly*, it should not be assumed that

those who express strong feelings when changes are proposed have either justice or commonsense on their side. For example, a suggestion has just reached me from England, which appeared in a letter written by a Jew and published in the issue of *The Jewish Chronicle* for 25 June, 1954, containing a detailed proposal for extending the Jewish Sabbath to cover two days, so as to meet the rabbinical objections which have been made before this Committee. The writer of the letter concludes:

Under my simple suggestion, I claim that the proposed calendar reform will not impair in the least the sanctity of the Sabbath, and its *status quo* will be fully observed.

This, Mr. Chairman, is one passing example of the reasonable and tolerant attitude which ought to be encouraged, if and when the proposal is examined by a specialist and impartial international committee.

*Fourthly*, it cannot be without interest to members of the Committee that last week considerable prominence was given in the press of the whole world to a closely-reasoned announcement appearing on the front page of the Vatican's *L'Osservatore Romano* (28 June)\*:

The Church has no reason to oppose in principle a modification of the calendar. If there were a general desire for reform, motivated by the special requirements of the peoples of the world, the Catholic Church would not fail to consider the question, providing naturally that certain conditions which she herself cannot overlook, are observed.

This gratifying announcement will, in the view of our organization, Mr. Chairman, have a powerful effect upon not only large religious communities—both Catholic and non-Catholic—but upon

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\*See page 138 for official Vatican translation.



governments as well. Although calendar reform is a civil matter, the movement is greatly heartened by this important declaration which, may I add, specifically refers to the Indian proposal now before the Economic and Social Council.

That consideration brings me, finally, to the question of *timing*. It has long been the view of my organization that the strongest effort should be made to bring about this much-needed change on Sunday, 1 January 1956, when the old and the proposed calendars coincide and the transition from one to the other would be most easy. This date was, in fact, specifically mentioned in the Indian memorandum. But my organization wishes to make its position clear on that point. This question has already been postponed from earlier consideration by the United Nations; it was the subject of a full report to the Council by the Secretary-General in 1947; and it now appears for the first time on the Council's agenda in 1954.

A realistic approach in putting the proposal into effect would have to follow somewhat the following lines, which I respectfully submit for your earnest consideration:

(1) It is highly desirable that an *ad hoc* committee of specialists should be established forthwith to go into the question of ways and means and to report its findings to the Council's 20th Session\* (that is to say in 1955) so that a definitive decision may be taken at that 20th Session.

(2) After the member governments have had a year to consider the plan, the 10th or 11th Session of the General As-

sembly (falling in 1955 or 1956) could then take up the matter, possibly in the form of a draft resolution or convention.

(3) Assuming the majority acceptance of such a convention, not later than 1956, it is our view that one or two years would be taken up by the implementation of such an international convention in terms of national legislation and by, possibly, the accession of later signatories or ratifications.

(4) That would bring us to about 1958—bearing in mind that social legislation does not normally operate immediately—so that the changeover could take place with smoothness and, we would hope, by majority, if not universal, acceptance on the first day of January, 1961, when the old and new calendar again coincide.

I urge the most careful consideration of these suggestions which are, as I have remarked, Mr. Chairman, "realistic" in their purport, though tentative in their nature. Such procedural details are, of course, matters for the proposed *ad hoc* committee. For example, manufacturers of Nautical Almanacs usually go to print about *four years* ahead; so the Committee would have to take account of all these factors in making their recommendations to the Council for the changeover.

I therefore conclude my address on a practical note, with every confidence that when the Council comes to discuss this question in plenary session, a decisive step will be taken *this year*, which will result in the world receiving at long last a perpetual, regular, harmonious and balanced civil calendar, which will add further success to the worthy achievements of the Economic and Social Council.

\*See Resolution, Page 110.

# THE HEARING

## UNITED NATIONS

INFORMATION CENTRE

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Geneva

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7 July 1954

(For use of information media: not an official record)

### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Eighteenth session

Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

*Item 15—World Calendar Reform* (item proposed by India):

Mr. M. N. SAHA (Indian Council of World Affairs) supported the proposal of the Indian Government for the establishment of a world calendar. He emphasized that he was speaking as an astronomer and as chairman of the committee in India which was endeavoring to unify the different existing calendars. Calendars were of two types: those regulating civil and administrative life and those regulating social and religious life. The need of our age was to establish a calendar on a scientific, instead of a purely conventional basis. The calendar had to be simplified so as to facilitate the civil and administrative life of all.

RABBI S. SAFRAN (Agudas Israel World Organization) spoke against the proposed reform as it appeared on the agenda of the Economic and Social Council, since it meant the end of the seven-day week and hence the abolition of the sabbatical tradition. The numerous organizations which he represented were not opposed to a reform of the calendar, but they were opposed to the reform put forward, since it involved the disappearance of the tradition of the Sabbath, so important for Jewish communities throughout the whole world.

Mr. SUCRANYES de FRANCH (Pax Romana) said that he was speaking only as representative of his organization and not for the Catholic Church. He was not opposed in principle to a reform of the calendar, but such a reform should respect the spiritual values, on which it might have some effect.

Miss Elisabeth ACHELIS (World Calendar Association, International) said that her organization supported the proposal of the Indian Government, and suggested the setting up of an *ad hoc* committee to examine all aspects of the problem and report to the Council during the following year. Measures should be taken under the auspices of the United Nations, the only body in a position to ensure the acceptance of this world-wide solution, before 1961, the year during which The World Calendar and the ordinary calendar would coincide.

Mr. M. L. PERLZWEIG (World Jewish Congress) said that he supported on

behalf of his organization, whose members were drawn from 60 countries, the principles laid down by the representative of the Agudas Israel World Organization. He emphasized the economic consequences for Jewish communities throughout the world of adoption of The World Calendar proposed by the Indian Government. He was not opposed to a reform of the calendar, but the proposed reform was not a scientific one, and would merely establish one more convention no better than others. He did not consider that public opinion had declared itself in favor of this reform. The Council and the General Assembly should consult Governments on the wisdom of the measure, and above all take account of public opinion.

Mr. Roger GORSE (France) did not consider the setting up of an *ad hoc* committee advisable until the States Members of the United Nations had been consulted by means of a questionnaire distributed to their Governments.



The United Nations ECOSOC Council Meeting on The World Calendar in Geneva, Switzerland. Left to right: Elisabeth Achelis, Founder and President of The World Calendar Association; Professor Meghnad Saha, F.R.S., Member of the House of People of India (Parliament), Honorary Director of the Institute of Nuclear Physics, Calcutta, representative of the Indian Council of World Affairs; and James Avery Joyce, F.R.G.S., International Liaison Officer of The World Calendar Association.



# YOUR VITAL STAKE IN THE WORLD CALENDAR

Some Economic and Social Advantages of Adopting The World Calendar,  
as Proposed by the Government of India at the 18th Session of the  
Economic and Social Council at Geneva, 1954

*By James Avery Joyce, International Liaison Officer,  
The World Calendar Association, International*

## I. INTRODUCTION

(1) Economists, statisticians, lawyers, administrators, and business men find that the hit-and-miss character of our present calendar is one of the glaring misfits of this modern age. Science and research have reduced many subjects of time and sense to exact calculation and careful formulae, but the precision which we have come to expect in many walks of life is sadly lacking from one aspect of our common experience—that of the calendar, the basis of all our calculations in the economic and social sphere.

(2) The Indian Government's "Memorandum on the Question of World Calendar Reform" (E/2514) circulated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 28 October 1953, states:

The ideal of the whole world is to have a logical and perpetual calendar to replace the present Gregorian Calendar, because it is widely recognized that the calendar we now use is unsatisfactory for the economic, social, educational, scientific and other activities of man. Modern progress demands the change. Such a revision has been the subject of study and research on

the part of experts, institutions and international organizations for many years. The consensus of opinion is that a new time system is necessary, adhering to the customary twelve months; but that it should be uniform; an invariable calendar, perpetually the same, more regular, scientific and advantageous from every point of view than the present Gregorian Calendar.

(3) *What* then are the advantages of the proposed new calendar over the old, and *why* has a matter of this kind been brought before ECOSOC at the present time?

(4) Ever since the International Chamber of Commerce in 1910 passed resolutions in favor of calendar reform and calling for an international convention to bring it about, answers to the above questions have been pouring in on the calendar reformer, who has a vital and urgent contribution to make to the social progress of our times. If the present memorandum contains only a scanty cross-section of some of those innumerable answers, it is because a whole volume on the subject would still leave many aspects to be explored. Systematic

and comprehensive research, both national and international, has hardly yet been attempted. Yet, if there ever existed a field of economic and social activity which would more speedily and amply repay in terms of human convenience and hard cash careful and thorough-going investigation by the world's governments and by the various organs of the United Nations, *this* is the field. By encouraging or authorizing such a global enquiry, with a view to future action by the United Nations, the 18th session of the Economic and Social Council would undoubtedly add lustre to its fine record of practical achievement.

## II. EXAMPLES OF WASTE AND INEFFICIENCY

(5) Let us take, quite briefly, one or two specific instances of the absurdities of the present calendar and its wastage in terms of money, manpower and efficiency, before turning to the benefits conferred by the proposed new calendar. In every business, trade, or profession, it is essential from time to time to compare output or operations in one year with those of a previous year. In the general run of industry, a check must constantly be kept on progress. For practical costing, accounting, and auditing purposes, comparisons must be available not only year by year, but, just as importantly, half-yearly, quarterly, and, usually, month by month. Such normal and essential statistical comparisons are made difficult, if not impossible, by the crudities of the present calendar, for the reasons which follow.

(6) The most striking feature of this almost universal "standard" of time-measurement — inherited from Julius

Caesar 2,000 years ago, and since modified slightly by Pope Gregory in the sixteenth century—is that EACH YEAR IS DIFFERENT! This amazing instrument for regulating human affairs has 52 complete weeks, but must borrow one or two days from another week to complete the year. Thus, it changes every year, and each year begins on a different weekday from the year before. National "holidays" or anniversaries fall on different days of the week, which is absurd. If one fixes the *day* of the week (e.g. for the opening meeting of the U.N. General Assembly), the date varies from year to year. If one fixes the *date*, then the day varies, and days have different values for different purposes. In an ordinary year, the first "half-year" has 181 days; the second 184 days. The "quarters" are unequal in length. Each "quarter" begins and ends on a different weekday. The months have a varying number of weekdays, from 28 to 31; and working days vary from 24 to 27. These irregularities, which have no rhyme or reason, prevent comparison of periods and necessitate continual changes in routine matters in, literally, millions of offices and businesses through the world.

(7) Consider as a case in point, the question of STOCKS. The British Board of Trade *Monthly Digest of Statistics* pointed out recently that: "Figures of stocks relate either to the end of the calendar month or to the end of a four or five weekly period." But it is not often realized how inconsistent the calendar can be until one tries to make actual comparison of a particular month in different years. Take a group of Januaries. In January 1947, there were four Saturdays and four Sundays; in 1948, five Satur-

days and four Sundays; in 1949, five Saturdays and five Sundays; and in 1950, four Saturdays and five Sundays. This sort of variation can happen with all the 31-day months. How can we measure economic factors with an expanding or contracting yardstick?

(8) Similarly, in calculating PRODUCTION or compiling progress records, whether by months, "quarters," or "half-years," the ordinary calendar is as inefficient as it is time-wasting. For this reason, many big firms—e.g. the famous Eastman-Kodak Company—divide their production and general accounting periods into even (equal) four-week periods. But the fact that no two consecutive years begin on the same day of the week still makes long-term comparisons difficult. And the fact that there are 13 four-week periods in one year complicates quarterly or half-yearly payments and other reckonings in the firms who have resorted to this device in order to escape the penalties of Caesar's methods in the Atomic Age.

(9) If this picture of confusion and wastage in the world of BOOKKEEPING is thought to be exaggerated, it must be remembered that many thousands of persons are necessarily employed as accountants, secretaries, and bookkeepers—people who enter up and look after the ledgers—in banks, insurance departments, stockbroking offices, accounting offices, and the like, in all countries. They constitute, in fact, a large proportion of the personnel in all industrial states.

(10) Let us take one further example in this field: the calculation of MONTHLY INTEREST. February has 28 days; the months on each side of it have 31. There is a difference of more than 10 per

cent between them. Again, those well-known commercial terms "sixty days" and "ninety days" rarely mean the same thing in any two parts of the same year or in consecutive years: "sixty days" from, say, 10 January, will not end on 10 March, nor will "ninety days" from 1 August terminate on 1 November, or even 31 October. The figures 60 and 90 are merely rough terms intended to denote two months or three. But why should so exact a science as modern finance be content with "rough" terms like these? Moreover, in these transactions, some part of a clerk's time must be occupied in ascertaining on what date a particular term will expire. Such continuous waste of effort might well amount to *one or two per cent* of the whole time involved in dealing with a particular transaction—a formidable accumulation of wasted time when multiplied by the vast number of transactions taking place in, say, the capitals of London, Paris, or Brussels, on any one day. Does not this chronic state of affairs cry out for investigation and remedy?

### III. RETAIL TRADE: A SPECIMEN INVESTIGATION

(11) Selecting one typical example from the RETAIL TRADE, according to a recent British Board of Trade return, there are in Britain 14,587 "men's wear" shops, selling men's and boys' clothes, shirts, and sundry articles of masculine attire. They employ 66,749 men and women, who receive in wages and salaries £17,043,000. The public spends no less than £191,424,000 per annum in these shops. Over 8,000 are one-man establishments, the rest are multiple organi-



zations, with anything from two to fifty or more branches and innumerable shop-windows. Taking in some detail the case of one of these latter firms, worth about two-and-a-half million pounds sterling, with about 75 retail branches and half a dozen factories devoted to the making of various classes of their wares, this firm's shops are to be found in good sites in all the biggest cities of the United Kingdom (London, Birmingham, Manchester and Glasgow) and single branches exist in many smaller towns.

(12) In this setting, let us consider what happens with the Christmas trade. Under the present calendar, Christmas Day can fall on any day of the week. In 1952, for example, a leap year, it fell on a Thursday, so the men's wear trade had three good selling days during the actual Christmas week, against only one the previous year, when Christmas Day fell on a Tuesday! Consequently, comparison of the figures of sales was no easy task for the accountant who had to undertake it, in the endeavor to find out whether his business was improving or declining. Again, taking the December figures as a whole, December 1951 began on a Saturday, and in 1952 on a Monday, which gave two Decembers of quite different week patterns. Although this is only a small section of the retail trade, December can be a busy and important month for millions of shopkeepers in all Western countries, especially for establishments which remain open on Boxing Day (as in Scotland) or close on New Year's Day, as in certain big cities.

(13) "Every year a similar problem arises," asserts the expert from whose report the above example has been taken. He goes on to assert:

The only comparisons that can be made with any fairness must cover a wider period than the precise Christmas weeks, because the shifting of the Christmas holidays throws everything out of gear. If, however, Christmas Day were fixed on a particular day—whichever day of the week it might be—then comparisons with corresponding weeks or months of previous years would present no difficulty. All these vagaries take a great deal of the time of costing clerks, bookkeepers, and accountants. With years, half-years, and quarter-years ending on regular dates, as your proposal allows, all the difficulty and extra work would be obviated.

The same authority in summing up the proportion of time absorbed on these unnecessary calculations by accountants and bookkeepers in this particular type of business, gave it as nearly *five per cent* of the total. As at least one in twenty—or five per cent—of the personnel were employed as bookkeepers, ledger clerks, or accountants, of a total wages figure of over £17 million, a sum of approximately £850,000 is spent on bookkeeping activities. Five per cent of this figure is just over £42,000. In other words, *the present calendar costs this minor branch of the retail trade in one country alone something in the neighborhood of £42,000 a year*. Other numerous sections of the retail trade, covering a wide range of commodities in popular use, and, behind them, vast industries with a capitalization of millions of pounds sterling, are also suffering from similar inefficiencies in our out-of-date system of time measurement. Who shall measure mankind's total loss?

#### IV. THE PRINTING TRADE

(14) Here it is relevant to refer to an entirely different but widespread trade—namely, PRINTING. Many large print-

ing establishments, who reckon to keep their machines running day and night through the working-week of five days, had to shut down their machinery on Christmas Day in 1952, which fell on a Thursday, start it up again on the Friday for one day's work, and then shut it down again on the Saturday. This process is, apparently, a very expensive one. Alternatively, they could have kept their machines running during this isolated day, also incurring unnecessary expense. But under such a reform as is now proposed, Christmas Day always falls on a Monday, thus adding to the workers' relaxation and enjoyment of the whole week-end holiday, and resulting, from the employers' point of view, in a great saving of money, time, and human energy.

## V. A NOTE ON RAILWAYS

(15) "A detailed study of the various ways in which our irregular calendar affects the railroads would fill a fair-sized volume," wrote the Assistant Secretary-Treasurer of one of the American railroads. Speaking of the "great boon" The World Calendar would confer, he added:

It is difficult to overstate the gains that would result in efficiency and smoothness of operations. TRANSPORTATION is largely dependent on the figures of past performances. Programs for the future have past and current records for guidance. If comparability is distorted, error follows. Under our present calendar, a difference of 11 per cent exists as a minimum between a 28-day February and a 31-day March. The difference may rise to 19 per cent owing to the incidence of Sundays and holidays. Such variables overhang every calculation—whether of money, working hours, schedules or facilities.

This is an American opinion, but similar conditions hold in Britain. It was a

British railway executive, visiting New York in 1951, who expressed a British point of view in the following interview with an American reporter: "Speaking personally," he said, "*I have been in favor of calendar reform for twenty odd years. And my attitude is shared by a large majority of railway executives in my own country.* As far back as 1921, we investigated this subject with a comprehensive questionnaire, and found that four-fifths of all those who replied wanted an improved calendar."

## VI. HEALTH AND HOLIDAYS

(16) Another point, which requires far more careful study than it has yet received, is that of PUBLIC HOLIDAYS. Based on important anniversaries in a nation's history, these usually fall on different days of the week, leaving isolated days on one or the other side of them. Under the Indian proposal, public holidays generally fall at the week-end, thus enabling the people at large to plan these occasional holidays as long week-ends. And even when this does not happen naturally under the new calendar, the same legislation which brings the calendar into effect, in any particular nation, could also legalize the observance of all such anniversaries—as is sometimes the case now—at the beginning or end of the working week. Many salaried workers, in particular, and even weekly wage-earners (who have to make their wage-packet stretch over several weeks in preparing for a short vacation) would gladly welcome such a change.

(17) In this connection, the following passage from an official brochure published by the Canadian Department of

Labour (D. of L. 71-65965) underlines the same lesson:

Employers and employees are all troubled by calendar irregularities, which make the calculation of payrolls, periodic reports and comparisons, and holidays enormously complicated. At present, most holidays fall on different days each year, and when they occur in mid-week they are a frequent cause of industrial shutdowns and absenteeism. The introduction of The World Calendar would see all major Canadian holidays falling on Mondays, Fridays or on week-ends, and most holidays would thus be part of a long week-end.

(18) But holidays are not an end in themselves. PUBLIC HEALTH is one of their invaluable by-products. Stabilizing the week-end vacations would itself bring more dependable relaxation, and—we are informed on medical authority—more fresh air and (maybe) sunshine into the lives of workers who can thereby get away from their jobs for several consecutive days and take their families with them.

(19) HOLIDAY RESORTS are eagerly awaiting the change. The following is a sample extract from the local press of one of Britain's premier holiday resorts and is typical of the popular support for the new calendar which is constantly reaching the offices of The World Calendar Association:

*Llandudno Advertiser* (13 February 1954):

#### WORK FOR NEW WORLD CALENDAR!

*Consider the advantages of Calendar Reform. Mr. T. Turner Pilling, who regards the matter as one of great importance to seaside resorts, directed the attention of the Publicity Association to it in these forceful terms:*

"The New World Calendar would be an immense boon for statistical purposes, for commercial undertakings of all de-

scriptions, in all countries, and particularly to seasonal places such as summer resorts, so I solicit your consideration and support."

#### VII. ORDERED FREEDOM

(20) Of course, there exist some peculiar individuals who pretend to delight in disorder and confusion. They object to the streamlining of our calendar because they say that such a reform would add to the monotony of life. What an empty argument is this! As if there were not already too much chaos in our economic and social affairs. Civilization and freedom imply progress towards greater public order and self-control. Why not invent watches which register an extra five minutes each day, so as to introduce the same element of disorder and confusion into our daily schedules, as our present calendar introduces into our yearly schedules? Calendar reform, far from leading to dullness and monotony, will add to the zest in life by giving us all a greater measure of foresight and sense of direction over our economic and social resources and enable us to conserve and employ those resources to the best advantage in a largely impoverished world, where sound economics still means devoting limited resources to the most socially beneficial ends.

#### VIII. ADVERTISEMENTS IN ADVERSITY

(21) A final "test case" can be deduced from some interesting data recently furnished by the principal of a leading firm of advertising agents in Canada. He said:

Today, in the broader aspects which affect humanity and our future, The World



Calendar definitely has a place. It offers a great opportunity to this age. In business it brings not only order and stability, but actual savings in dollars and cents which show on a balance sheet. . . . I shall indicate here a sample of its benefits to advertising agencies.

In demonstrating this, I am using only one medium for the moment . . . we can forget about television, radio, billboards, streetcars, buses, magazines, handbills, direct mail leaflets and booklets, skywriting and posters in subways under the earth. Let us take only the newspapers. In the U. S. and Canada we have about 2,000 dailies and around 9,000 which appear once, twice or thrice weekly\* . . . these 11,000 all carry advertising . . . every working day of the year about \$2,000,000 worth of business is handed to newspapers . . . though about seven out of every hundred orders placed are later cancelled.

In newspaper advertising the most important single factor, apart from the content of the ad, is the day of the week on which the advertisement appears. *Each weekday has its own customers and adherents and certain advertisements must be shown on certain specified weekdays*—and on no other day. For instance, accepted best days of the week for food advertising are Thursday and Friday. Automobile products go in on Friday evening and Monday morning papers. Clothing, not being an "impulse item" has no particular day, but haberdashery generally is placed before Thursday. Financial, paint, drugs, hardware, pet food, beverages and a host of other products all have logical reasons for the weekdays on which their advertisements appear. Also there are illogical reasons. . . . Thus, every order has to be checked to see that date and day correspond and are correct for the product.

Then, for the 9,000 weeklies and semi-weeklies, all orders must be double-checked. These fine public watch-dogs come out on Mondays and Fridays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, Tuesdays only or Tuesdays and Thursdays—any and all combinations are

possible. Between the checking and double-checking within the agencies, thousands of hours are needlessly lost and there is still a 7 per cent error. This latter is mainly chargeable to the present mixture of weekdays and dates on the calendar, and to you and me and all of the well-meaning workers around us.

On the basis that \$6,000,000,000 each year spent for newspaper advertising involves writing 20,000,000 orders, and that it takes 30 seconds to check and 30 seconds to double-check each order for day, date, and newspaper, we have a time loss of almost 50,000 days. However, under The World Calendar orders would still have to be checked; but with dates and days in perpetual agreement, it could be done in one-third the time. Therefore, actual preventable loss because of the Gregorian calendar—about 33,000 days each year—is increased in the handling of multifarious forms, involving a further loss of 40,000 days.

When these calendar imperfection losses are added together, the figure assumes impressive proportions—73,000 days. This occurs each year and it is only a part of the whole loss; for to it must also be added the errors concerned with dealing in all kinds of other transactions which depend on calendar accuracy. Magazines which close on the "last Thursday" of the month; trade papers which have to have all material by the "second Monday" and internal publications which appear the "first Wednesday" every second month. Other media which have curious closing dates, discount days for bills payable and receivable, and stated contract acceptances all have their own harvest of calendar mistakes. As far as advertising agencies alone were concerned, *the very least estimate is that enough money could be saved by adoption of The World Calendar to provide every agency in the country with another man free of charge.*

## IX. A "PILOT" SURVEY

(22) In 1950, The World Calendar Association, which enjoys consultative relationship with ECOSOC, sponsored a pilot survey of an important segment of American business to determine the na-

\*Comparative figures for Britain are: 163 daily and Sunday newspapers, and 1,387 weekly newspapers, in addition to which there are 2,159 general and specialized magazines and 1,452 trade, technical and professional periodicals.

ture and extent of the problems created by the present calendar from the viewpoint of the business man. Its results were as illuminating as they were convincing. The Controllars Institute of America cooperated in this study by allowing its membership to be polled, consisting, in the main, of controllers of the largest corporations representing all lines of economic endeavor. Approximately one-sixth of the membership replied and the returned questionnaires were classified in broad categories as follows: (a) *Manufacturing*—food and tobacco products, textile products and apparel, lumber, furniture and paper products, chemical and drug products, primary metal products, fabricated metal products, machinery and transportation equipment, and miscellaneous manufacturing; (b) *Distribution*; (c) *Public Utility and Railroad Companies*; (d) *Finance and Insurance Companies*; and (e) *Miscellaneous Companies*.

(23) Of the 538 respondents to the aforementioned questionnaire, 466 or 86.6 per cent—an *overwhelming majority*—indicated that the present calendar created difficulties for them. These difficulties ranged from minor annoyances to such major problems as required the adoption of a modified calendar for internal use in the intelligent handling of business affairs. This often resulted, they asserted, in still further confusion because the modified calendar conflicted with the conventional calendar in general use. Of the 466 respondents indicating difficulty with the present calendar, 437 or 93.8 per cent indicated that a *stabilized calendar would alleviate these difficulties*. The other 72 respondents (13.4 per cent of the total responses) were divided as fol-

lows: 57 (10.6 per cent) said they had no difficulties with the calendar, 6 (1.1 per cent) did not know, and 9 (1.7 per cent) did not answer the relative question.

(24) Although generalization about American industry, or even about the membership of the Controllars Institute of America as a whole, ought not to be made on the basis of this preliminary survey, it can be considered as a most helpful pilot investigation which is *probably* indicative of the kind of response one might expect of a scientifically designed sample of the entire American business population. It is significant, however, that more than 20 billion dollars in capitalization are represented in the response to this survey, and, of this amount, more than 18.5 billion dollars favored calendar revision. Despite the limitations of the sample on which the survey was based, the fact that so important a segment of American business admitted to a wide range of difficulties with the calendar, points clearly to the need for more extensive investigation such as only the United Nations and its member governments can give. (See, for fuller details, pamphlet, "The Present Calendar and Its Effect on American Business," published by The World Calendar Association.)

## X. THE REMEDY IS AT HAND

(25) The World Calendar, now proposed by India, stabilizes these irregularities with a calendar which treats each year as a unit, and in which the week (with a background of long established habit and custom) is given full recognition within each year. Sunday has for many years been accepted as the first day

of the week in the civil calendar, and is continued as the first day in The World Calendar. Each year, half-year and quarter commences with a Sunday and ends on a Saturday. Each quarter is made up of 91 days (13 complete weeks) in which the months have 31, 30 and 30 days each. By this method, 52 weeks are completed on Saturday, 30 December. As the length of the year requires one more day than 52 weeks in ordinary years, and two days more in leap years, The World Calendar completes the year by adding another day of rest, on 31 December, to be called (it is suggested) "Worldsday," at the end of every year, and a similar additional day of rest halfway, on 31 June, in leap years. These "days apart" will be seen to be *definite dates*. It is also suggested that they will become world holidays dedicated to greater understanding, friendship, and cooperation among nations. The use of these stabilizing days is the means by which a calendar may have the same day and date arrangement every year and still maintain workable scientific accuracy. By this device, each year is complete in itself; there is nothing left over and the year is fixed in perpetuity, providing for perfect comparability between corresponding segments of years. With every year the same, all economic and other planning is simplified, and a particular date always falls on the same day of the week, however long-term the plan.

(26) The voice of Mr. Arthur J. Hills, a distinguished member of the National Labour Relations Board of Canada, is only one of the growing chorus of far-seeing and competent statesmen, administrators, and men of affairs in favor of this reform, who recently remarked:

Because of the greater convenience and the economic gains to be obtained from the use of such a calendar, with an invariable day and date arrangement, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce has requested the Government to take the initiative in having The World Calendar placed on the agenda of the United Nations Assembly at the earliest possible date.

Organizational support for The World Calendar in Canada has developed great strength in recent years. Besides the Chamber of Commerce, the reform program is supported by the Canadian Manufacturers Association and by the three large labor groups—the Trades and Labour Congress, the Canadian Congress of Labour and the Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour. These three organizations together speak for more than 85 per cent of Canadian organized labor.

## XI. RELIGIOUS SUPPORT

(27) The foregoing memorandum has been confined to factors falling directly within the scope and competence of the Economic and Social Council and the Specialized Agencies. But it would be a mistake to imagine that we can segregate those aspects of international life from others. The literature of The World Calendar Association bears constant witness, for instance, to the widespread support for calendar reform from religious organizations throughout the world.

(28) The latest and, perhaps, the most important of such constructive contributions to this development for many years past, took the form of a detailed statement, referring specifically to the Indian proposal, which appeared on the front page of the Vatican's journal *L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO* on 28 June last, over the signature of the distinguished scientist and theologian, the Reverend D. J. K. O'Connell, the director of the Vatican Observatory. In the official translation, the following two passages, bear-



ing directly on the growing demand for ACTION, have given a great impetus to the movement, in Catholic and non-Catholic countries alike:

On previous occasions the sponsors of reform have been the Governments of various Christian States. Now, for the first time, the proposal is being made by the Government of a great country with a predominantly non-Christian population. This is a matter of some significance. It shows that the interest in, and desire for, a reform of the calendar is becoming more widespread. . . .

I think it is true to say that the Church has no reason to oppose in principle a modification of the present Calendar. If there were a general desire for reform, motivated by serious requirements of the economic and social life of the peoples of the world, the Catholic Church would not fail to consider the question, provided, naturally, that certain conditions which She Herself cannot overlook, are observed.

## XII. CONCLUSION

(29) It is abundantly clear that many powerful trends and influences, industrial and scientific, religious and intellectual, are moving steadily in the same direction. It has not been the purpose of this memorandum to suggest detailed

methods and techniques by which the Economic and Social Council might give shape and direction to these trends and influences. The World Calendar Association is, however, undertaking specific research projects in certain countries where branches of the Association are most active. The Association is also willing to cooperate with and assist in the development of wider researches or investigations whether conducted by private organizations, governmental departments, or the United Nations Organization itself.

(30) The real tasks of calendar reform are just beginning on the operational level. If this immediately vital work of inquiry and research is systematically done, it should be possible for the 20th Session\* of ECOSOC in 1955 to have before it sufficient factual material and comparative data from governments and non-governmental organizations—to proceed to the establishment of an *ad hoc* expert body to prepare the international machinery needed to bring this long overdue reform into reality.

\*See Resolution, page 110.

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## OBITUARY NOTE

PANAMA.—The sudden death of Dr. Juan Rivera Reyes has removed a loyal advocate and friend of many years from this Association. As chairman of the Panamanian World Calendar Association, International, he was a most enthusiastic and staunch supporter of The World Calendar, valuing the unity that it would bring to the world. In 1950 he represented the Association before the World Federation of United Nations Associations in Geneva, where he gave a memorable address that was published in the September 1950 issue of the *Journal of Calendar Reform*. He was the founder of the World Federation in Panama and the Secretary of the Panama Society of International Law. In 1952 his booklet, *Un Calendario Perpetuo para el Mundo*, received wide favorable attention in Central and South America. At the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1953, he represented his country with the rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. The World Calendar Association has lost a delightful and a devoted friend. *Frater, Ave atque Vale.*

# A JEWISH VIEW ON CALENDAR REVISION

## An Open Letter to Certain Jewish Opponents of the Indian Proposal for The World Calendar

By Daniel Sher

*Representative of Israel on the World Advisory Committee of  
The World Calendar Association, International*

*Mr. Sher's "Seven Questions" was published in Geneva, Switzerland, on 13 July 1954 and made available to all persons, official and non-official, concerned with ECOSOC's deliberations on the Indian Resolution concerning The World Calendar.*

**G**ENTLEMEN: The World Calendar is now on the agenda of the Economic and Social Council, and this proposal has received by far the greatest amount of support from governments, organizations, and individuals. Apart from your criticism of the scheme, opposition is negligible. Therefore, as a citizen of Israel, I desire to submit for your consideration *seven specific questions*, and make a reasoned appeal to you.

*Question 1:* Do YOU BELIEVE that the overwhelming majority of the human race should be prevented from amending their civil calendar, in order to safeguard a right which is exercised by only a part of the Jewish people outside Israel (a small minority in fact) who claim that they would thereby be inconvenienced in observing certain practices of their own religion in a non-Jewish environment—practices which only a fraction of members of the Jewish faith observe, either in Israel or the Diaspora? If so, do you consider that such an attitude is in keeping with the principles of democracy and justice which have heretofore been part

of your own contribution to the development of human dignity and international understanding?

*Question 2:* ARE YOU ASKING the rest of the world to abstain from reforming a calendar, which is now in universal use, on the grounds that such a reform would interfere with the "human and religious rights" of a minority to practice certain religious tenets with greater ease? Would not such a demand jeopardize the very "human and religious rights" on which you base your claim, seeing that such a concession would prevent the majority from observing the calendar which they desire to use, just as you do yours? In other words, is it to be assumed that the "human and religious rights" of the minority include the right to veto a non-religious and non-sectarian reform desired by the majority?

*Question 3:* CONCEDED THAT YOU ARE, as far as religion is concerned, within your rights in observing the Jewish calendar, either in Israel or outside, is it honest to invoke *religious arguments* against the reform of a universal civil

calendar, which we ourselves do not observe for religious purposes?

**Question 4:** IF IT IS THE BASIS of your case that the *survival of the Jewish people* depends upon the rejection of The World Calendar plan, how do you reconcile this astounding claim with the following considerations:

(a) Are you asserting that Judaism, after giving full proof of amazing vitality for thirty-five centuries, after contributing to so many aspects of civilization, and after establishing the State of Israel against tremendous odds, has now degenerated to such a level that a purely technical amendment of a non-Jewish calendar would jeopardize its very existence?

(b) Do you imagine that the great majority of the Jewish people have so low an estimate of their survival value as to support such a view?

(c) If the danger is so great as you pretend, how does it happen that a growing campaign in favor of The World Calendar, which has now begun *in Israel itself*, is not only permitted, but has already elicited growing support in important quarters? And by claiming, as you are, that the opposition to The World Calendar comes from Jews without distinction of religious or political views—are you aware that many Jews, again without distinction of religious or political views, have already written us from Israel, endorsing The World Calendar?

(d) If the traditionalistic observance of the Sabbath were indeed a matter of survival of the Jewish people, how would you explain the *fact* that in Israel proper such observance is far from complete and is furthermore confined to a minority?

(e) Even if this were truly a question

of “survival,” are you insisting that it is the duty of the non-Jewish community, rather than that of the Jews themselves, to put up with inconveniences in the matter of a calendar?

(f) Recalling that the Jewish Diaspora survived for many centuries before the inclusion of the seven-day week under Constantine in the Christian calendar (A.D. 321), why should the Jews not continue to survive, whether or not the week stays without change?

**Question 5:** AS ONE OF THE REASONS given by Jewish opinion for the formation of the State of Israel was that such an event would give an opportunity to all Jews, who so desire, to lead a fully Jewish way of life, are you seriously inviting the non-Jewish world to forego a reform which it requires for the conduct of its common affairs, in order to suit the convenience of a small fraction of Jews living outside Israel, *after* the setting up of the Jewish State? Are you not thus working against the very *raison d'être* of the State of Israel?

Furthermore, do you feel it is really consistent with Jewish honor and dignity to try to capitalize on our six million Martyrs in appealing on *these* grounds against The World Calendar?

**Question 6:** IF YOUR CLAIM IS VALID that the new civic calendar, by provoking the opposition of a small Jewish minority, would *increase international tensions*, is it not more likely that the failure, because of opposition by that minority to carry out this reform which would be beneficial to the majority of the world, would increase those very tensions?

**Question 7:** IF YOU MAINTAIN THAT The World Calendar should be dropped by the United Nations, because there are



bigger international problems of "human survival" to deal with, why not urge that the United Nations drop other items from its agenda, such as, e.g., racial discrimination, rehabilitation of refugees, technical assistance?

Again, your apparent unwillingness to give the reform of the calendar its just and rightful study and careful consideration in an international committee is a strong indication, is it not, that you are afraid of such a study? Does this not suggest a weakness of your premise and a weakness of your arguments?

FINALLY, AN APPEAL: We would draw your earnest attention to the following realities which strike at the root of your opposition:

(a) Whereas The World Calendar is recognized, by scientists and men of affairs over many years and in many countries, as scientifically sound, your counter-proposal of adding an entire week once every few years is utterly impracticable and was decisively rejected, after careful scrutiny, in the days of the League of Nations;

(b) The allegedly changeless princi-

ples which you proclaim as governing Jewish time-reckoning, and especially the observing of the Jewish Sabbath, are themselves questionable on the grounds of both history and physics and have been authoritatively challenged for many years; so you cannot expect the rest of the world to forego forever the advantages of a valuable reform, merely on the strength of this questionable allegation of yours.

(c) Contrary to your own claim, the rate of correspondence between the Jewish Sabbath and Christian days of rest, because of their permanency as to day and date of the year, would increase rather than decrease under the reformed calendar.

(d) There is already set out in The World Calendar literature ample evidence in support of the above propositions, and we shall always be willing to explain to you and to others, who have difficulties in accepting the new calendar, how little you will lose and how much you will gain by joining with the majority who wants this change for the common good of all.

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KARANDANA, Ceylon.—Dr. D. C. P. Beneragama, editor and orientalist, wrote recently: "I joined The World Calendar Association about 20 years ago and have written to papers and magazines on the subject from time to time. As there is no branch organization in this country, may I suggest that steps be taken to inaugurate one. I shall be very willing to render whatever assistance I am able to give. I am sure there are others here who are ready to foster the aims of the Association by active participation." The World Calendar Association welcomes Dr. Beneragama's suggestion and hopes that a Ceylon affiliate will be established. It also hopes that other countries without an affiliate will take steps immediately to form one.

MARACAY, Venezuela.—"It is my opinion that The World Calendar can amply meet all the requirements of all official (government), commercial, banking and social fields, etc., because of its balanced character and stability, which are necessary for the world-wide acceptance of the year as a unit of time. I take the liberty of placing myself at your disposal for the purpose of distributing among the general public in this country all the literature on this subject, including copies of The World Calendar itself. . . ."—Manuel Ramirez.



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

3339 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE  
WASHINGTON 8, D. C.

No. 194/37.

THIS NO. SHOULD BE PREFIXED TO THE ANSWER

July 12, 1954.

Miss Elizabeth Achelis  
The World Calendar Association  
630 Fifth Ave.  
New York 20, N.Y.

Dear Miss Achelis:

I am enclosing a copy of an official English translation of an article on calendar reform that appeared in L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO under date of June 28, 1954. I felt that you might be interested in this article.

With sentiments of esteem and every best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours,

*A. J. Cicognani*

Archbishop of Laodicea  
Apostolic Delegate

# REGARDING THE PROPOSED REFORM OF THE CALENDAR

*By the Reverend Daniel J. K. O'Connell, S.J., Director of the Vatican Observatory*

THE proposal for a Reform of the Calendar, made by the Government of India, will be discussed by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) during its 18th Session which opens on 29 June. On various occasions during the past thirty years plans for a Reformed Calendar have been discussed by the League of Nations. Very many plans were considered, but only one has survived, that of The World Calendar Association. (\*) It is this plan that is being proposed by India. On previous occasions the sponsors of reform have been the Governments of various Christian States. Now, for the first time, the proposal is being made by the Government of a great country with a predominantly non-Christian population. This is a matter of some significance. It shows that the interest in, and desire for, a reform of the calendar is becoming more widespread. One can well understand that India, which suffers from the confusion due to a multiplicity of calendars, should desire to introduce uniformity in this important matter. It is interesting that the Indian Government should favour The World Calendar, which

is substantially our Gregorian Calendar, with some modifications.

Our Calendar, as far as the length of the year and the division into months is concerned, is, indeed, neither Gregorian nor Christian in origin. The length of the months remains today exactly as they were fixed by Julius Caesar, except that Augustus is said to have taken one day from February to add to the month which he named after himself. The names of the months have remained unchanged since the time of Julius Caesar, except that, after his time, Quinctilis and Sextilis became July and August, respectively. In early Roman times March was the first month of the year, but already before Julius Caesar the Roman year began on 1 January.

Caesar introduced a leap year every fourth year, in order to adjust the length of the calendar year to that of the solar year. This adjustment was not exact. By the sixteenth century the calendar year was several days ahead of the solar year. Pope Gregory XIII set up a Commission to study the matter and to devise a way to correct this error. At the same time he founded the Specola Vaticana, so that astronomical observations might be made to demonstrate the need for a reform of the Calendar. Pope Gregory, in his Calendar Reform Bull of 1582, decreed that ten days should be dropped in that year,

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(\*) It is not without interest to recall that this scheme was devised by a Catholic priest, Abate Marco Mastrofini. The book in which he described the plan was published in Rome in 1834.



in order that the Spring equinox should be brought back to 21 March. He prescribed a new Leap-Year rule, which is so exact that the calendar year will keep closely in step with the solar year for thousands of years to come. The Bull also decreed new rules for computing the date of Easter, based on fresh calculations of the relation between the lunar month and the solar year.

There have been some attempts to improve on the Gregorian leap-year rule, so as to make the adjustment of the calendar year to the solar year more exact. For all practical purposes such alterations are totally unnecessary. They suffer, moreover, from a serious defect, in that they lack the simplicity which is such a great advantage of the Gregorian rule. In fact, the framers of the new "World Calendar," recognizing the excellence of the Gregorian rule, leave it quite unchanged.

The new scheme proposes: (1) to adjust the lengths of the months so that the year shall consist of four equal quarters, and (2) to count the last day of the year—and, in leap years, the day after 30 June—as extra days not belonging to any week or month. It follows that any particular date would be on the same day of the week each year.

It is not quite correct, if we wish to be precise, to call the proposed reform "a reform of the Gregorian Calendar." What would be altered are not the changes made by Pope Gregory but the length of the months which we have inherited from Pagan Rome, and the sequence of the weeks, which will be altered by the introduction of intercalary days. This distinction is, however, quite commonly ignored. Many of those who advocate the

change, speak of the defects and inconveniences of the "Gregorian Calendar" (for example, the unequal quarters) as if they were the result of Pope Gregory's work. A recent example of this attitude occurs in an article in a widely-read periodical by an Indian writer, Dr. H. A. Ali, of the University of Hyderabad. Dr. Ali writes (*Journal of Calendar Reform*, April 1954, page 24): "The answer to the question as to how the Christian year began to commence with the first of January is very simple. Nearly 1600 years after Christ came the vicegerent of God on earth, known as Pope Gregory XIII. He was a very powerful Pope and he wanted the new year rejoicings to be close to the date on which the nativity of Christ was celebrated. Since the birth of Christ on 25 December is not an established fact, he would have been wiser to have brought the Nativity celebrations closer to the vernal equinox. But the Spring festival was a pagan custom and Christmas had already become associated with snow and hearth-fires. So instead of changing the official birthday of Christ, the New Year was shifted from March, the time when all Nature rejoices, to January, a period when Nature is asleep. And Europe quietly obeyed the Pope in 1582, when the Renaissance had been preaching its gospel of intelligence and freedom for 200 years!" It is perhaps sufficient comment on this remarkable distortion of history to remind the reader of the fact that from before the time of Julius Caesar, who flourished more than 1600 years before Pope Gregory, the year began on 1 January. It is true that in the Middle Ages in various parts of Europe a custom grew up of dating the year "from the Incarnation" (25 March)



WORLD WIDE PHOTOS

**FOR CALENDAR REFORM:** *The Rev. Daniel O'Connell, head of the Vatican Observatory.*

or "from the Nativity of Our Lord" (25 December). However, before the time of the Gregorian Reform, 1 January had again become, in most of Europe, the beginning of the year.

We can, of course, excuse an Oriental writer for not being familiar with the history of Western civilization. Others, however, who might be expected to know better, write in similar terms, and it is time that the matter should be made clear.

With regard to the attitude of the Catholic Church towards proposals for a re-

form of the Calendar, there are some who think that the Church must necessarily be opposed to all attempt at change. This belief is, in fact, not correct. I think it is true to say that the Church has no reason to oppose in principle a modification of the present Calendar. If there were a general desire for reform, motivated by serious requirements of the economic and social life of the peoples of the world, the Catholic Church would not fail to consider the question, provided, naturally, that certain conditions which She Herself cannot overlook, are observed.

Closely connected with Calendar reform is the question of fixing the date of Easter. The sponsors of The World Calendar Plan state explicitly that they do not attempt to deal with the Easter question. They realize fully that that is a matter which pertains to the ecclesiastical authorities. However, it cannot be denied that the desire for a fixed date for Easter is becoming more widely felt. In the early centuries of the Church there were long and often very bitter conflicts over the date of Easter, until a solution was reached in the Council of Nicea (325 A.D.). Hence, it is, indeed, a very venerable tradition that places Easter on the first Sunday after the full moon after the vernal equinox. The Church, however, which made that rule would also, undoubtedly, have the power to alter it, if there were grave reasons which would make such a change advisable.

A Protestant View

## CLARIFYING CALENDAR REFORM

*By Elisabeth Achelis*

LOOKING backward over twenty-three years of active work to improve the calendar, I take much satisfaction from the progress made since 1930. From a small beginning the cause today has a steady world-wide following with committees, affiliates and cooperating organizations in almost every country of the world. And this has been achieved in the face of disappointments, opposition and the kind of delays which all too often beset worth-while reforms.

It is increasingly recognized that from the economic and practical viewpoints the new calendar will bring enduring benefits to peoples everywhere. Much has been written and said along these lines; however, I am convinced that there is another aspect not sufficiently expressed or understood—the spiritual significance inherent in the balanced, orderly and harmonious twelve-month, equal-quarter calendar.

The present Gregorian calendar, although it bears the name of a Christian Pope, has gradually been accepted by practically all nations in their contacts with the outside world. Its adoption by non-Christian countries is strong evidence that it is regarded as a scientific, secular system of time-measurement. The Gregorian reform was an astronomical adjustment by which the calendar was brought into agreement with the seasons.

The attitude of religious groups was

expressed at the General Conference of Calendar Reform at the League of Nations in 1931. At the conclusion of the meetings in Geneva, I felt it important to discuss the whole matter with religious leaders. I had talked with Mahatma Gandhi in London, before proceeding to Geneva, who informed me of his approval of our work and disapproval of a thirteen-month plan. On my return to New York I approached the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

In due course calendar reform came before the Universal Christian Council in Geneva, the world organization of Protestant and Eastern Orthodox Churches, and the Council passed a formal resolution instructing its officers to study the whole question. The ensuing study took four years of research and consultation, after which a resolution was passed (with but one dissenting voice) approving The World Calendar.

The Roman Catholic Church had already expressed its views. It had stated to the 1912 meeting of the International Chamber of Commerce that "The Holy See declared that it made no objection, but invited the civil powers to enter into an accord on the reform of the calendar, after which it would willingly grant its collaboration in so far as the matter affected religious feasts." This position was reinforced in 1924 when representatives



of the Vatican, Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches assured the League of Nations that no dogmatic objection stands in the way of calendar reform.

As for other world religions, the approval of Moslem nations is an assurance that religious sectarianism has no logical place in the revision of the civil calendar. Japan and China have made similar statements, and India (through Mahatma Gandhi and more recently, Prime Minister Nehru) has indicated its support and its belief that reform of the civil calendar lies outside the religious field. The calendar is rightly considered as a scientific and secular system of recording time conforming to astronomical law without religious bias of any kind. Once the new calendar is installed, the various religions can take up the question of revising their respective feasts within the orderly, balanced and harmonious civil system. No government seeks to dictate to them, or to assume any authority over religious calendars. Thus the Association does not deal with a fixed Easter. . . .

Calendars in the ancient past were placed within the authority of the priesthood which comprised the most intelligent and learned men of a tribe or nation. They had opportunities to study and scan the heavenly bodies which influenced the days and the coming and going of the seasons. Thus priestly scientists and mathematicians were the ancient calendar makers, setting aside certain religious holy and feast days and adjusting them to fit within the calendar. All too often religious ideas interfered with the clear scientific concept of the calendar itself, so that the calendar became enmeshed with countless religious beliefs, superstitions, traditions and customs in the vari-

ous nations of the world. Religious sectarianism entered into the making of the calendar.

Most ancient calendars were based on the moon with the month the important time-unit. Among these early moon calendars were those of the Babylonians and Chaldeans. The years had twelve months with an occasionally inserted thirteenth month considered as an "evil time." Months had 28 days of four weeks. The four phases of the moon had each about seven days which gave rise to periods of seven days, and the days were named after the then known seven planets. Each day and even the hours were supposed to be influenced by their particular planets which gave rise to superstitions and taboos. The scientific aspect became secondary in a maze of astrological practices and forecasts.

The Israelite calendar was also lunar, but the seven days were considered days of Creation with the seventh day, the Sabbath, devoted to worship, prayer and rest. The week had a religious connotation far removed from the Babylonian series of seven days with their astrological influence. In further stages of the calendar, the beginning of the year was changed from the spring season to the autumn season; an earlier pentecontad calendar of seven weeks with seven Sabbaths augmented by the closing fiftieth day (as a special offering to the Lord) was discarded; a new theory of the "unbroken continuity of the seven-day week" was established by religious leaders during the Babylonian captivity. From a strictly lunar calendar it gradually evolved into a luni-solar calendar. Thus we observe that the Israelite calendar has not been a static system but was frequent-

ly changed to meet later requirements of the people or their rabbis.

This opinion is confirmed in an article, "Israel's Calendar Confusions," wherein the writer closes with these words: "Acceptance of The World Calendar may entail some changes; but even the exponents of the Conservative Jewish religious tradition know that Jewish time-reckoning systems have changed in the past and are again changing today in independent Israel."

Most famous of all ancient calendars is perhaps that of the Egyptians. Their priestly astronomers and mathematicians, after scanning the celestial bodies and forecasting the inundation of the Nile, discovered that the seasons were dependent upon the sun and thus the sun was a more vital influence than the moon. The moon as the time-keeper was discarded and the sun became the central unit of the calendar. Twelve months of 30 days each constituted a year of 360 days at the end of which five days were added and placed under the authority of the priesthood. By this method the calendar was kept in step with the seasons. The many holy and feast days were also under the jurisdiction of the priests.

The earliest Roman calendar was so confused and complicated by priestly interference that it was completely impractical. Julius Caesar arranged the calendar on a more scientific and orderly basis, taking as a pattern the Egyptian solar calendar. He eliminated the moon calendar with its arbitrary insertion of a thirteenth month and distributed the five days of the Egyptian solar calendar more evenly throughout the year. He introduced the leap year day every four years, a device by which the calendar would

conform more nearly to the seasons. Leap year day was an inserted day similarly as was the more ancient fiftieth day in the Israelite pentecontad calendar. But here also as with previous calendars the priesthood wielded its influence.

The Moslems use a strictly lunar calendar not adjusted to the seasons so that months wander throughout the year until after 33 years they return to their original starting point, then to resume their wanderings. The religious character entered in with the Hegira of the Prophet Mohammed, from which event the Moslem calendar is dated 622 A.D. Their twelve-month calendar is justified in the Koran: "Twelve months is the number of months with God, according to God's book, since the day when He created the Heavens and the Earth."

The Christian calendar had its beginning with Constantine the Great, the first Western ruler converted to Christianity. The basis of this calendar was still the Julian upon which was grafted the seven-day week used by the Jews. The day of worship was changed to the first day of the week, Sunday, so as to commemorate the Resurrection of the Lord—on the first day of the week. . . .

Opposition to calendar reform in a proposition that is astronomical and mathematical comes from the interference of certain religious groups. They fail to understand the universal and scientific character of the calendar and that it belongs to all nations, peoples and races. It does not deal with religious belief, dogma, theology, tradition, myth or orthodoxy. Therefore a tradition formulated in the time of the Babylonian captivity should not be made a reason for unreasonable adherence by Orthodox

Jewry to their theory of the unbroken continuity of the seven-day week.

A Seventh-Day Adventist minister recently said that history all too often recorded that in hindering progress "zealous religionists prevailed upon the authority of the state to enforce their convictions." Surely in a scientific and astronomical matter civil authority should not be hampered by self-centered sectarian points of view.

To certain religious sectarianists opposing The World Calendar because of the new world holidays I pose three questions: First, are we not told that the Sabbath was made for the benefit of man and not for his enslavement? Second, scientifically the international date line requires a six or eight day week when crossing it, depending upon the direction. Does not this cause a broken continuity of the seven-day week? Third, for Christians and Jews the Fourth Commandment clearly reads that six days of the week are for labor and one day for rest. But in the accelerated and intensified age in which we live, the six days of labor have been reduced to five with one day for relaxation and another day for worship, praise, prayer and rest. Why is the opposition reconciled to this accepted change while adhering to a tradition not recognized by most Christians and Moslems, Hindus and Buddhists?

I wish to restate again firmly and unequivocally The World Calendar is global, does not deal with any form of religious differences and is not subject to any religious group. It includes and serves all religions, all races, all nations, all peoples and all professions and activities of life. The World Calendar is a servant of Time as Time is a servant of the Creator.

In considering this we might well contemplate the words of Gamaliel when he warned the opposition: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. And to him they agreed."

Recalling that in the past, Moses was opposed by his people only to have the Decalogue become the moral code for civilization, Ptolemy Euergetes of Egypt was opposed only to have his idea of an extra day for the "Good-doing Gods" adopted by Julius Caesar several centuries later, Copernicus' and Galileo's scientific concepts were opposed only to have them universally accepted, and Standard Time with its international date line was opposed as interfering with "God's time" only to be accepted as the world's clock time, so too The World Calendar is opposed but will yet be accepted with its universal world holidays. The new calendar rises above politics, prejudice, superstition, nationalism and sectarianism. Firmly it stands, foursquare on its own.

The World Calendar is achieving a close and harmonious relationship among the various time-units in an admirable and just manner. The different holy and feast days, observed by the many different groups of religion, fit easily and smoothly within it. No preference is shown any one particular religious group, they are all dealt with impartially. The Christian still observes the first day Sunday, the Moslem may have his sixth day Friday, and the Jew and Seventh-Day Adventist their seventh day Saturday.

Of outstanding moral and ethical sig-



nificance are the two new world holidays; the annual Worldsdays, to be universally observed at the close of every year (similarly as the closing fiftieth day in the ancient Pentecontad calendar) and the quadrennial Leapyear Day (introduced by Julius Caesar) at the end of the second quarter in the middle of leap years, maintaining a nice balance between the two half years. Both these world holidays are considered non-working days.

Thus in The World Calendar the last 365th day is annually honored by all peoples on earth with a new world holiday that completes every year. Then each new year begins with Sunday, a day of praise, prayer and worship, whereby the activities of each year begin regularly with Monday 2 January. The psychological influence of the *new* closing and the *new* beginning of the year is still not understood, but I believe its significance will be recognized and more fully appreciated as the years roll on.

The World Calendar is free from all religious sectarianism which too often in the past has confused and divided the people in their time-system.

A significant mathematical plan is explained in the last book of the Bible. The holy city of Jerusalem is portrayed as foursquare, with each of the four sides having three gates and each side facing the four cardinal points of the compass which in breadth, length and height are equal. Mention is then made of the tree of life bearing and giving twelve kinds of fruit and yielding its fruit each month, the leaves for the "healing" of nations.

Comparing this mathematical pattern with the civil World Calendar one cannot fail to be impressed with the close similarity. The "healing leaves" of nations

are symbolic of the annually recurring Worldsdays which in its world-wide observance would unite all peoples. "Can it be that The World Calendar is a fulfillment of an ancient prophecy?"

Not only does the revision of the twelve-month calendar follow the laws of nature, conforming to the four seasons and the length of the year but it obeys the cosmic laws of harmony, equality, balance and order. Harmony is innate in all the various time-units, equal and just consideration is given each without preference, balance is maintained between the equal quarters and half years, and a rhythmic order pervades the entire calendar.

When the scientific and moral aspects of the new civil calendar and the deep meaning and far-reaching influence of the world holidays are recognized and understood, I believe sectarian opposition will disappear. The World Calendar will be accepted on its practical, utilitarian, beneficial and ethical merits. A wholesome balance is established between the material and the spiritual.

Abbé Chauve-Bertrand, a French priest and a foremost European calendar authority, wrote: "Everything living develops and changes; we must be continually abandoning something of the past in exchange for something better in the future; the most ancient and venerable of traditional institutions must themselves be modified from time to time; and *more than once people have regretted that reforms did not come about when they were first desired.*"

An eminent scientist, Professor Martin P. Nilsson, in "Primitive Time-reckoning" published in 1920, draws the conclusion that the calendar "must be emancipated from religious cult."

Adoption of the solar calendar by the Egyptians in 4236 B.C., forerunner of the present Gregorian, is given high praise as "the earliest dated intellectual event in human history." And this is an era that we are too prone to describe as pagan and primitive!

Like the Egyptian solar calendar the acceptance of The World Calendar will be looked upon as one of man's outstanding achievements, a signal event of human endeavor promulgated when conditions were confused, uncertain, and humanity everywhere laboring under terrific economic, physical and mental stress and strain.

The United Nations, before which the calendar is under consideration, is the one established organization to deal effectively with the revision of the calendar on an international basis. Were this body to recognize The World Calendar as based on astronomical law yet imbued with moral-ethical qualities; regard it as a civil matter, unrelated to this or that religious dogma and tradition; deal with it from the universal and impersonal standpoints; approve it for world use; there would result far-reaching and lasting benefits for the common good of mankind. Such an act would impress itself upon civilization for countless years and would justify the ideals and hopes of the men and women who fostered this world-wide and much-needed international organization. *One World Calendar for One World* would go far toward creating greater unity, cooperation and good will.

Civilization urgently needs this new time-plan for the new age upon which we are entering. Its adoption is essential to world progress and man's development,

making possible new discoveries and inventions as undreamed of as were the radio and airplane by the advocates of Standard Time. Vast possibilities stretch out before us with the daily use of the orderly and perpetual World Calendar.

The touchstone of the present era is unity and a search for peace. We have come quite a way in breaking down the barriers of nationalism. What is more fitting then, than to eliminate religious sectarianism from our time-system and adopt The World Calendar as a means to establish a system by which the entire population on Earth can function and live more easily and peacefully?

With all the persuasion of which I am capable, I ask *urgency of action* on the part of every member of The World Calendar Association, every individual and leader, governments, foreign ministers, the United Nations, international and national organizations and all other groups. *We must all press forward now* so that The World Calendar can be put into operation when both the old and the new calendars coincide on Sunday 1 January 1961.

Let us then without delay

"Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble logical diagram once recorded will never die, but . . . will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever growing insistency."

Thus will The World Calendar stand an enduring monument to the greater progress and welfare of civilization, to the courage and wisdom of man, and to the glory of God—the Creator.

# CURRENT PRESS COMMENT

## *Calendar Convenience*

*The Christian Science Monitor*

TIME brings about many changes. Among them is the change of a calendar every year since last year's dates do not fit this year's weeks. The proposed World Calendar, now advocated in the United Nations Economic and Social Council by India, would end that by adopting a "perpetual" calendar that would stand unchanged year after year and still fit the astronomical cycle.

But it is not so easy to change calendar systems. In 730 A.D. the Venerable Bede, an Anglo-Saxon monk, discovered that the year under the Julian calendar was 11 minutes and 14 seconds too long, adding a day every 128 years. But, as the *World Almanac* casually remarks, "nothing was done about it for 800 years."

By that time, in 1582 when Pope Gregory decreed a new calendar, it was necessary to skip 10 days to get back in step with the sun. Though the Gregorian calendar now is in general use throughout Western nations and in extensive parts of the Orient, there have been and are many other calendars.

Among these are the Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Chinese, Jewish, Mohammedan, and the remarkably accurate Mayan calendar of nearly nine centuries ago in Central America. In fact, there are said to be some 14 calendars in use in India, which partly explains that nation's interest in calendar reform.

Advantages claimed for the uniform 12-month calendar were summarized recently by Miss Elisabeth Achelis, president of The World Calendar Association: "Businesses and professions would find their bookkeeping greatly facilitated. Scientists would find their reckonings standardized. Governments would find international affairs simplified."

Such calendar reform should hardly require 800 years.

## *The Currency of Time*

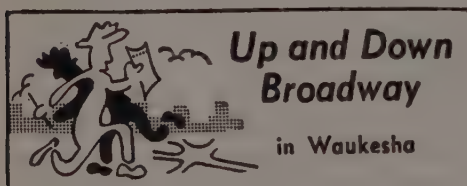
*The Times, London*

THE single-minded enthusiasts who have patiently campaigned over so many years for a revision of the Gregorian calendar have achieved a notable success by persuading the Economic and Social Council at Geneva to refer the question, by a unanimous vote, for study by the Governments of the world, with a view to its discussion at the nineteenth session of the council. The search for an ideal calendar is of immemorial antiquity. We have three natural measures of time—the apparent rotation of the sun and moon round the earth and the apparent annual motion of the sun among the fixed stars. We call these the day, the lunar month, and the year; and we have to face the fact that the three are incommensurable—that is, that none of them can be expressed as an exact multiple, or even an exact fraction, of either of the others. Hence every calendar must be an approximation.

Since the true year exceeds 365 days by about a quarter of a day, the Gregorian calendar preserves a conventional year of 365 days which, by inserting years of one day longer at intervals, according to a surprisingly simple rule, is kept in close accord with the movement of the heavenly bodies. But only leap years can be divided into equal halves consisting of complete days; and no year can be divided into thirds, quarters, tenths, or twelfths, or into exact weeks. The World Calendar proposal—the survivor of many, and the one that has found favor at Geneva—is mainly concerned to remedy this alleged defect. It cannot make twelve equal months, for a year of 360 or 372 days would be impossible; but it can divide a year of 364 days into four equal quarters of ninety-one days, and give to each quarter a uniform succession of three months, of thirty-one, thirty,



and thirty days respectively. But every year there will be at least one day over; and this it is proposed to place at the end of the year, included in no week . . . , and made a perpetual holiday and called "worldsday." In leap years—which would be those of the Gregorian system—a second and similar day would be inserted at the midpoint. With these extra days left out of all reckoning, every year would be of exactly fifty-two weeks; and so the days of the week would recur on the same days of the month every year. Each month would have the same number of working days every year; any quarter could be directly compared with any other. . . .



### Happy Worldsday to You

*Waukesha (Wis.) Freeman*

**P**ERHAPS some of you have read or heard about plans to revise our out-dated calendar. The calendar we use these days, you know, is 2,000 years old. It was instituted by Julius Caesar and modified by Pope Gregory XIII. It gets its name from him: the Gregorian calendar.

It needs overhauling badly for many reasons. *Newsweek* magazine this week gives us the low-down in simple language.

There's a group called The World Calendar Association, International, which is a 24-year-old organization and the foremost World Calendar crusader.

Their idea is to add a Worldsday every year after 30 December. In the new calendar each year will end with a Saturday, followed by a Worldsday, followed by a Sunday. In leap year another Worldsday would follow 30 June.

We're all for it. Holidays would fall on the same day each year, and each Worldsday, of course, would be a holiday, too. . . .

How about it? *Tom and Gene*

## Australian Comment

*Morning Herald, Sydney, New South Wales*

**H**OLIDAYS and anniversaries that will always fall on the same weekday each year, and a perpetual calendar which does not change from year to year—these are objectives of The World Calendar Association. Leading the demand for changes in the existing calendar are Dr. Albert Caquot of France, an internationally-known engineer, and Miss Elisabeth Achelis, founder and President of The World Calendar Association.

Both feel that our present calendar is "so eccentric that it makes statistical comparison of time periods inexact and complicated." Their proposals for reform would go hand in hand with United Nations efforts to preserve world order.

Defects of the present calendar are survivals from ancient compromises and superstitions. The new system would benefit many fields of endeavor, including transportation, industry, education, religion, home, government and labor. Every business can simplify its accounting and programming. . . .

## Revision Long Overdue

*Hunter's Bulletin, Milbank, S. Dak.*

**A**NY man in business has had occasion to become irritated by the capricious variations of our present-day calendar. But from habit and long familiarity, many of us regard the inconveniences it creates as a necessary evil—something to be tolerated like the weather.

A growing segment of our population, however, is beginning to realize that calendar reform is a sensible thing which ought to be accomplished, and quite soon too.

It needs to be said that the Gregorian calendar, although now adopted by most Western nations, is by no means universal; in fact, it is used by only about half the world's population. The rest measure their time by such ancient systems as the Coptic, Chinese, Moslem, Persian and Jewish calendars. A universal plan—simple, perpetual and rational—is long overdue.

# EXCERPTS AND REVIEWS

## *Profile of Astronomer Royal*

(*The New Yorker*)

SIR Harold Spencer Jones, the Astronomer Royal of the United Kingdom, is a huge man of sixty-three, with a granitelike, handsome countenance, bushy eyebrows, and a lofty forehead. He flew over here recently at the invitation of The World Calendar Association to talk on "Is There a Need for Calendar Revision?" at the Hayden Planetarium. We had a cup of coffee with him at the Chatham, where he was staying.

"I'm for Miss Achelis," Sir Harold said, referring to Miss Elisabeth Achelis, president of The World Calendar Association, which recommends four identical quarters of one 31-day month and two 30-day months, plus a 365th day in ordinary years, and 365th and 366th days in leap years. The present, or Gregorian, calendar, Sir Harold said, makes the year 26 seconds too long, causing the seasons to drift backward one day every 3,323 years.

We requested Sir Harold to drift backward over his life, and he gazed at us for a full ten seconds before replying. "I am the tenth Astronomer Royal in 278 years," he said in low, measured tones. "The appointment is made by the Prime Minister, and the Astronomer Royal is an employee of the Admiralty. He is the director of the Royal Greenwich Observatory, which sets the time for the world. There was a difference between the Paris Observatory, which is older, and Greenwich in the early days. Greenwich was founded to obtain information on the sun and the moon and the planets, in order to improve knowledge about their positions and motions to assist in navigation. Many ships were lost in those days."

Sir Harold paused and stared at us again. "Whereas Paris?" we asked.

"Whereas Paris worked just at the whim of a particular director," he said. "No continuity. That's why the meridian that passes through Greenwich was the only one seriously considered when your State Department called a conference in Washington in 1884 to determine from what meridian geographers all over the world should reckon longitude. However, since 1948 we've been moving the observatory from Greenwich to the Castle of Herstmonceux, in Sussex, sixty miles outside London. The move will be completed in 1956. We are moving because of the smog in London and because light conditions at night there are bad. Too many neon signs. Herstmonceux dates from 1440; the government modernized it for us. I live in part of it. It's not one of those grim castles. The rooms are light and airy. It's the earliest large brick building—rose-pink brick—in England. We now compute time there, so Greenwich time is being figured one minute and 20 seconds away from the meridian."

Sir Harold, who has headed the Greenwich Observatory since 1933 and was knighted in 1943, was born in London, the son of an accountant. He was an outstanding student of mathematics and physical optics at Cambridge, and between 1923 and 1933 he was His Majesty's Astronomer at the Royal Observatory in Cape Town. "That observatory was founded in 1820," he said. "Greenwich can't observe the whole sky—just the Northern Hemisphere. The Cape takes care of the Southern Hemisphere. A new star was discovered in a rather interesting way while I was down there. I've forgotten what the man's name was. He was a postal employee. Going home in the early hours of the morning in 1925, he looked at the sky and didn't recognize that chap up there. Something looked wrong. He did the proper thing. He sent a tele-

gram to the Cape Observatory. We got a spectrum of the star that very night, while it was increasing in brightness. It showed that stars expand enormously when they flare up. We called it Nova Pictoris 1925. It can still be observed—faintly."

We asked the Astronomer Royal what time it was. He consulted a wristwatch, which agreed with ours. "I haven't brought my best watch," he said. "This is my second-best. My good watch is on British time, and I don't want to change it to local time. It always astonishes me—the precision with which a commercial watch can record 86,400 seconds in a day. A really good watch can keep within 30 seconds of correct time a couple of years on end. When I first worked as Chief Assistant at Greenwich—I succeeded Sir Arthur Eddington in that post in 1913—we used a pendulum clock whose smallest measurement was a tenth of a second. Now we use the quartz clock, which divides seconds into one-hundred-thousandths. Research on an atomic clock is being carried on."

## Holiday Chant

(*Fortune Magazine*)

**I**F human cussedness is not enough to create collective-bargaining difficulties, the Gregorian calendar is now adding trouble to labor negotiations. Christmas Day, 1954, and New Year's Day, 1955, fall on successive Saturdays. In the following year Christmas, 1955, and New Year's, 1956, fall on successive Sundays.

The unions want the holidays. Management argues that the function of holiday pay is to reimburse the worker for wages lost on a day he didn't work; but the unions say that if the contract stipulates seven paid holidays yearly, they want seven paid holidays, regardless of the calendar.

Some firms will observe the preceding Friday as a paid holiday, others the following Monday. Some are substituting another day of the year as a holiday; some are just giving an extra day's pay with no day off.

## Time for a Change

(*Advertiser, New Canaan, Conn.*)

**B**EFORE the United Nations is a proposal for calendar reform that many persons and interests look upon favorably. Obviously the time must come when a more orderly calendar organization is adopted. The Gregorian calendar is at best a relic of the middle ages. Its lunar months and solar seasons are out of whack. Adoption of The World Calendar would erase much confusion.

Some objection arises from religious sources to the proposed universal calendar reform, but much of this opposition is being overcome. The advantages would be self-evident. Shopkeepers and business of all kinds would benefit. It would save millions of dollars in industrial enterprise that could be planned more regularly and thus get fuller production. As for the general public, a wait of 2,000 years is long enough to wait for a needed change in something as important as the measure of time, now hopelessly muddled, by which we live from day to day.

## Passing the Time

By RAMON COFFIN

(*In Buffalo, N. Y., News*)

**T**O a large degree, the affairs of people are directed by "passing time." What would happen if we lost all our clocks and calendars?

If we lived on a far island, life might drift along well enough without the marking of time. We could go to bed when we grew tired, in the morning we could get up when we chose, without any jangling alarm clock.

In the workaday world, however, we need watches, clocks and calendars. We go to school or start to work at a fixed time. Trains, buses and airplanes have schedules. We need calendars for records of history, as well as for other purposes.

Egypt seems to have been the country where the 12-month yearly calendar was invented.



# New Harmony in the Calendar?



JANUARY  
APRIL  
JULY  
OCTOBER

FEBRUARY  
MAY  
AUGUST  
NOVEMBER

MARCH  
JUNE  
SEPTEMBER  
DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4						1	2	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	

W

NEWSWEEK—ARTHUR LUBELL

## Calendar Change?

(Newsweek, 16 August 1954)

AS life becomes an ever-tighter complex of train and airplane timetables, court calendars, statistical studies, and interest calculations, the strain on the old Gregorian calendar grows more noticeable. For the last 50 years groups of citizens, dedicated to their mission, have tried to interest the world's governments in sweeping plans for calendar revision. By last week they had a major indication of progress. At Geneva, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations voted unanimously to present a proposed World Calendar to some 90 member and non-member governments. With it goes a request to submit their views on reform early next year.

*'Wandering Weekday':* The present calendar is 2,000 years old. Instituted by Julius Caesar and modified by Pope Gregory XIII, from whom it gets its name, the Gregorian calendar has two major defects: The "wandering weekday" and irregular months and quarters. The 365th day of the year adds one day to what would otherwise be an even 52-week year; therefore, one more weekday must be borrowed from the next

year. This moves each succeeding date one weekday later (two in leap year). Christmas is on Saturday this year, on Sunday in 1955, and on Tuesday in 1956. Days anchored to particular days of the week, like Easter, must be on different dates each year. Also, there are months of 31, 30, 29, and 28 days all falling in irregular order, starting on different days, and forming unequal quarters.

The proposed World Calendar (see picture) offers a more effective substitute. Its most striking innovation is Worldsdays. Designed to give wandering weekdays a permanent home, Worldsdays follows 30 December and has no assigned weekday. In the new calendar each year will end with a Saturday, followed by a Worldsdays, followed by a Sunday. In leap years another Worldsdays will follow 30 June.

The result is a quite harmonious pattern. Every year is the same, beginning on a Sunday and having a constant number of workdays. The quarters are identical, each having 91 days, thirteen weeks, and always beginning on Sunday. Each month has 26 weekdays, plus Sundays. Every date falls on the same day of the week every year.

The World Calendar Association, International, a 24-year-old group with chapters

or affiliates in 37 countries, is the principal World Calendar crusader. Its leaders, gratified by the U.N. decision, concede that the nations have plenty of time to make up their minds. The World Calendar, to begin smoothly, must be inaugurated on a year when the Gregorian calendar also starts on a Sunday. The first year to fill this bill is 1956. But the calendarists, with an eye on calendar publishers and almanac writers, have advanced their target date to the next one, 1961.

### *Let's Simplify Life*

By LAURA Z. HOBSON  
(*New York Journal American*)

I AM joining up with people all over the world who root for calendar reform. There hasn't been any since 1752, while we were still the Thirteen Colonies. That was 202 years ago, so don't call anybody restless or fickle who cries "It's time for a change!"

Most of the calendar reform people argue in terms of industry and commerce, of payroll records or quarterly interest and fiscal years. I prefer the housewife's arguments. Any housewife's arguments are simpler. She knows a house runs better by system than helter-skelter, and that if washday came on Monday one week, Tuesday the next and Friday some other, then nobody in the family would ever have a clean shirt or a pair of fresh socks on time. The same goes with her budgets and bills. So many dollars, say, for a month's food. But is that for 30 days, or 31, or 28? You can budget food by the week, of course, but what about your monthly gas and electricity and phone bills? Or the rent, or the installments on car or refrigerator?

How much simpler life would be—not only in business and banks, but right in your own home! When you wrote a letter, you'd never again have to open the garbage pail you just lined with newspaper to find out the correct date. Our present calendar is slap-happy. If any housewife ran things like that, her whole family and her in-laws would start telling her off, and never quit for a month of Sundays.

### *Why India Wants It*

(*Register, Des Moines, Iowa*)

SINCE last fall, the government of India has been urging the United Nations to recommend adoption of The World Calendar in 1956. The matter is particularly pressing for India because most of its people still live by calendars even more archaic than the Gregorian. The popular Hindu calendars have got the religious festivals out of whack with the seasons, and the widespread practice of astrology and its superstitions is no longer in step with the stars and planets.

So India is planning to change calendars anyway, and since they've got to go through with the inconvenience of change, they'd like to go direct to a modern, universal, perpetual calendar, instead of to a 1582 revision of a basic 46 B.C. system.

The proposed calendar has many advantages, chiefly that it would make life simpler by doing away with the present irregularities and complications. The calendar has been changed before; therefore it is neither sacred nor inviolate. Certainly it needs some kind of betterment.

### *Days in Months*

By E. P. HODGINS  
(*Medicine Hat, Alberta*)

To find the days in any month  
One needs some calculation:  
From 28 to 31  
They vary in duration.

With practice one can memorize  
Each month which is a fixture,  
But February varies with  
An extra day in mixture.

In seven months we've 31 days,  
In four we've one day fewer:  
It's time we were considering  
A calendar that's newer.

A calendar has been devised  
Which wins full world approval  
And its adoption soon will mean  
The present one's removal.

## Calendar Revision Debated at Geneva

By WAYNE GARD  
(Dallas, Tex., News)

AT Geneva [in July] the nations are taking up again a subject that has been discussed for many centuries. This is the

revision of our calendar. The United Nations has had this subject on its agenda since 1947. It was brought up again last year by India, whose people use fourteen different calendars.

Study of this problem by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations has been spurred by a recent announcement at the Vatican. A newspaper there, *L'Osservatore Romano*, has said in a front-page article that the Catholic Church is preparing to collaborate with the United Nations in calendar reform. It is ready even to consider the establishing of a fixed date for Easter.

The Vatican article was written by the Rev. Daniel O'Connell, an Irish Jesuit who heads the Vatican Observatory. He made it plain that the Catholic Church is not opposed to calendar reform and wrote with apparent favor of the plan sponsored by India and The World Calendar Association.

## Stabilized Birthdays

By J. HUGH BRUETT

(Astronomer, Oregon Higher Education System)

RECENTLY I was taking dinner with young friends who only a few weeks earlier had a new arrival in their family. Little Bobby had come to them on Thanksgiving Day, 26 November. The parents were sure his birthday would not come on Thanksgiving day every year.

Calculating ahead we were able to determine that he will celebrate his birthday and

Thanksgiving together only twice in the next 12 years—when he is 6 and 11 years old, but not in the years between.

According to The World Calendar, which many are trying to have adopted in all civilized countries, a certain day of any month would every year fall on the same weekday. But this system is not yet in effect.

If we eliminate leap years, our present year has 365 days. With 364 days to a year, we should have an even 52 weeks annually. But the 365 days divided by seven leaves a remainder of one day. This means that since 1 January 1953 (an ordinary year), came on Thursday, 30 December 1953, the end of 52 weeks, was Wednesday. Then 31 December 1953 was Thursday and New Year's Day, 1954, fell on Friday.

If all our years were ordinary years of 365 days, then on any date of one year, the day of the week would be advanced just one day over the year before. Thus, 1 January 1953, is Thursday; 1954, Friday; 1955, Saturday, etc.

But there are those vexing leap years when "unattached" men have to go into hiding for fear of being roped into "the holy bonds." These have two extra days over 52 weeks (thus prolonging the agony of the timid males); 15 June 1955 will fall on Wednesday; in 1956, a leap year, on Friday, or a jump of two days.

It is not difficult to calculate backwards or forwards for many years for the day of the week for any date between 1 March and 31 December. But since the extra day comes at the end of February, we must remember to treat January and February of leap years as ordinary years in our calculations and these months the next year as being in leap years. (In calculating backwards, remember that 1900, although divisible by four, was not a leap year).

For those who want to try their skill, let us suggest that they show from a 1954 calendar and the rules given above that 1 June 1953 came on Monday; 15 April 1951 on Sunday; 3 February 1948 on Tuesday; and 10 March 1943 on Wednesday.





# CALENDAR REFORM

## in a Nutshell

### THE PRESENT CALENDAR

(like the world)

IS

confused  
discordant  
irregular  
wasteful and shifting

WHEREIN

nothing fits  
nothing agrees  
nothing is stable

### THE WORLD CALENDAR

(forecast of a better world)

IS

harmonious  
ordered  
regular  
saving and perpetual

WHEREIN

everything fits  
everything agrees  
everything is stable

### WHAT SHALL THE ACTION BE ?

#### STAND STILL

Let well enough alone  
The people are content  
Other more worth-while  
things to do

#### GO FORWARD

Give something better  
Improve the improvable  
Conserve valuable time, the  
stuff life is made of

### TODAY

There are too many calendars  
in the world

United Nations can give *one*  
*calendar to the world*

### WHAT SHALL HISTORY RECORD

?

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**AUSTRALIA:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Prof. A. D. Ross, Chairman; John K. Lavett, Deputy Chairman, Box 4256 G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W.

**BELGIUM:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Dr. F. Moreau, Chairman, 115 av. George Bergmann, Brussels I.

**BOLIVIA:** Comité Boliviano del Calendario Mundial, Dr. Gaston Barrera, Chairman, La Paz University, La Paz.

**BRAZIL:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate. (The Affiliate is at present without a Chairman due to death of Rear Admiral Radler de Aquino.)

**CANADA:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, A. J. Hills, Chairman, Room 31, 102 Bank St., Ottawa.

**CHILE:** Comité Chileno del Calendario Mundial, Prof. Alberto Cumming, Chairman, Calle Manuel Rodriguez, Santiago.

**CHINA:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Dr. Ch'ing-Sung Yü, Honorary President; Dr. Chu Chia-hua, Chairman, 15 Chuan Chow St., Taipeh, Taiwan.

- COLOMBIA:** Comité Colombiano del Calendario Mundial, Dr. Belisario Ruiz Wilches, Chairman, Observatorio Astronomico Nacional, Apartado No. 2584, Bogotá.
- COSTA RICA:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Don José Borrás, Chairman, "La Prensa Libre," Aptdo. Postal 1533, San José.
- CUBA:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Dr. Elias Entralgo, Chairman, Havana University, Havana; Dr. Salvador Massip, Adviser.
- DOMINICAN REPUBLIC:** The World Calendar Association International, Affiliate, Barney N. Morgan, Chairman, Box 727, Ciudad Trujillo.
- ECUADOR:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Dr. Jorge Egred P., Chairman, Astronomical Observatory, Apartado 165, Quito.
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- GREAT BRITAIN:** The World Calendar Association International, Affiliate, Lord Merthyr, Chairman, 20 Buckingham St., London W.C. 2.
- GREECE:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Athanase Politis, Chairman; Prof. S. Plakidis, Sec., Observatory of University of Athens.
- GUATEMALA:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Don Manuel Eduardo Rodriguez, Chairman, Diario "El Imparcial," Guatemala.
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- ITALY:** Italian National Committee on Calendar Reform, Prof. Amedeo Giannini, Honorary Chairman; Dr. Carlo Rossi, Chairman, Piazza Armando Diaz 2, Milan.
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- NICARAGUA:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Don José H. Montalvan, Chairman, Palacio Nacional, Managua.
- NORWAY:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Major K. S. Klingenberg, Chairman, Thomas Heftyes Gate 56B, Oslo.
- PANAMA:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, (The Affiliate is at present without a Chairman due to the death of Dr. Rivera Reyes.)
- PARAGUAY:** Comité Paraguayo del Calendario Mundial, H. E. Señor Ministro Coronel Don Luis Irrazabal, Chairman, Paraguayan Embassy, Lima, Peru.
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- POLAND:** Polish Committee for Calendar Reform. (The Committee is at present without a Chairman due to the death of Mr. Jakiel.)
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- SPAIN:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Rev. Father Antonio Romáñá, S.J., Honorary President; Ramon Ximenez Gil de Avallé, Chairman, Urgel, 44.1° 4', Barcelona.
- SWITZERLAND:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Prof. Emile Marchand, Chmn., 2, Genferstrasse, Zurich.
- TURKEY:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Dr. I. A. Dereoglu, Chairman, Beyoglu, Istiklal Caddesi 485, Istanbul.
- UNITED STATES:** The World Calendar Association, Inc., International, Affiliate, Elisabeth Achelis, President, 630 Fifth Avenue, New York 20.
- URUGUAY:** The World Calendar Association, International, Affiliate, Prof. Alberto Reyes Thévenet, Chairman, Liceo "Hector Miranda," Calle Sierra 2274, Montevideo.
- YUGOSLAVIA:** Yugoslavian Committee on Calendar Reform. (Without a Chairman due to the death of Mr. George Curcin.)



# CALENDAR REFORM

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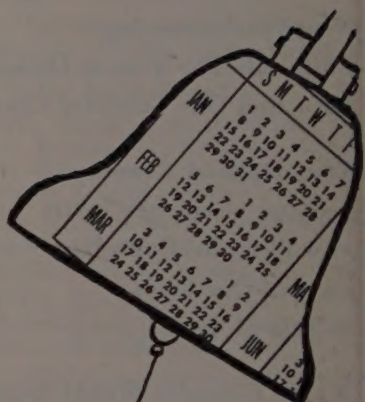
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RING IN THE CONCORD  
OF THE NEW!

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS  
ELISABETH ACHELIS  
1955



THE  
WORLD  
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